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Home Weekly

FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 336.

A SUMMER'S SEA.

BY WILLIAM WATKINS.

I am like one who dreams strange dreams,
Softly afloat on a summer's sea
At early dawn, when the sun's bright beams
Are cast on the wildly throbbing sea—
When a radiance bright of golden light
Is thrown on the throbbing, pulsing sea.
And fancies strange that as quickly change
As the beams which dance on the sunlit sea,
Glide through my mind as though to find
The source of the thoughts so strange to me;
And all my dreams of beautiful themes
Are sweet as the breath of the rose to me.
In the golden light of the morn so bright
I calmly float on the summer's sea;
Around and above a warmth of love
Seems throwing its influence over me,
And all my care grows light as air—
The breath of the isles blown over the sea.
From the verdant shore to one before
I slowly float on the flowing tide;
From the depths of the sea comes soft to me
A melody sweet as an angel's song,
That rises solemnly up from the sea—
A whispered prayer on the perfumed air.
Odd fancies I weave as the billows heave
And dash o'er me their glittering spray.
Swift from my soul its deep griefs roll
And flee like the mists of the morning away,
While softly I float on the summer's sea
To the dim unknown of the Evermore!

Little Volcano, THE BOY MINER; OR, The Pirates of the Placers.

A ROMANCE OF LIFE AMONG THE LAWLESS.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S EYE," "PACIFIC
PETE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

LITTLE VOLCANO CREATES A SENSATION.

THERE was scant time for reflection after Billy Breeze uttered his startling warning. Almost ere the two outside passengers realized the danger threatening them, the injured wheel of the lumbering stage-coach upsetting and casting the trio heavily to the ground. Fortunately the soil at this spot was unusually free from stones, else the maddened grizzly might have found its task rendered even more easy.

The terrified horses plunged and kicked furiously, seeking to free themselves from their tangled harness, but one was pinned down upon its side by the poles, and its plunging only served to baffle its companions.

Zimri Coon was the first of the trio to scramble to his feet, still clasp the barrel of his broken rifle, while the other hand was busy in gouging the dirt from his eyes. But only for a moment he thought of himself. A broken, bewildered cry from the lips of Little Volcano restored his eyesight and cool with astonishing rapidity. He saw the boy miner lying close beside the fallen horse, striving to free himself from beneath the foot-board, while the iron-shod hoofs more than once in their mad lashing had found its task rendered even more easy.

With a powerful effort that tore one boot half-off the lad's foot, Coon succeeded in rescuing his partner from his perilous situation. And not one moment too soon.

From close behind his back resounded a loud, peculiar *snuff*—almost *snuff*—so close that it fairly caused his tangled hair to bristle. He had inclined to stand on end; so close that the hot, reeking breath seemed to scorch his skin.

With an involuntary yell of terror, the old man leaped forward with wonderful agility. He had heard a similar sound more than once, but never before so close. And as he bounded aside, his flesh crawled and his iron-shod heels, as it was, he had actually reached their mark instead of merely adding a little more to the wonderful embroidery of his garments.

Little Volcano also heard the fierce challenge, and despite the mingled blood and dirt which obscured his eyesight, realized his peril in its full force. Springing aside, he fell against the fallen horse, tumbling over it and falling full against the hips of the near wheeler. One second later and the boy miner would have received the full force of the terrified brute's iron-shod heels; as it was, he was simply flung back between the wheels of the stage without further injury.

Doubly foiled, the wounded grizzly attacked the fallen horse, burying claws and muzzle in the animal's quivering flanks. One horrible, almost human-like scream of agony—a single stroke of the huge paw; then the horse lay motionless with broken back, while the grizzly growled with satisfaction over its bloody feast.

With one man's plunge that dragged the coach nearly atop of the horse, the two horses stripped their harness and darted away toward Hard Luck. The death-shriek of his dying pet, aroused Billy Breeze more effectively than anything else could have done. He saw the ravening beast tearing and mauling his dumb friend. He felt for the knife that usually rested upon his hip. It, together with his pistols, were gone—lost when he was hurled to the ground. All unarmed though he was, it seemed as though he meant to attack the monster with his bare hands.

"Here!" abruptly cried old Zimri Coon, thrusting a revolver into his hand. "Suck it to the devil—let's either him or us!"

The words were almost drowned by the double report. Stricken hard, for scarce two yards divided the weapons from the brute's body, the bear snarled furiously with rage and pain, turning abruptly upon his assailants.

With a warning cry the old man sprang nimbly aside his pistol sending bullet after bullet in quick succession into the shaggy mass. Billy Breeze followed this example, but unfortunately one foot caught in a portion of the tangled harness, and he fell at full length, right before the grizzly. Death seemed inevitable.

Coon fired his last shot, but seemingly without effect. He sprang forward with a shrill cry, though his only weapon was a clubbed pistol. But quick as he was, another was even more rapid. A light form passed him and alighted fairly upon the shaggy brute's back. A pistol muzzle was thrust against the bear's ear. A muffled report—the grizzly plunged heavily forward, falling half-over the bewildered driver, tearing the moist ground with its long claws. But the effort was only spasmodic. The leaden pellet had sunk deep down in its brain, and the King of the Mountains lay there in its blood, mangled more than a helpless mass of quivering flesh.

"Go-thunder! hurrah fer hooray!" yelled old Zimri, capering around like one possessed, or a U. S. squaw at a "pino-wedding" where the whiskey is free. "You 'tarnal little squeegee—you—you! Ohi somebody do hold me while I—"

"You help him out," interrupted Little Volcano, as a muffled cry for help came to his ears from the over-



Little Volcano, with a quick aim, discharged his pistol at the animal's head just before it came abreast of him.

turned stage. "I'm afraid there's worse luck in yonder!"

With a little effort the upper door was unfastened and flung back. First the pale, terrified face of Hector Champion appeared; seemingly unable to help himself, a vigorous push from inside sent him heading to the torn and trampled ground. Then his wife raised the limp form of the young girl through the aperture. Her face was white as death, save where the red blood slowly trickled from a cut above the temple.

Little Volcano took the precious burden in his arms, but there was a strange expression at his heart such as he had never experienced before, and almost sunk beneath the light weight as it was, he assailed him that she was dead.

Mrs. Champion quickly relieved him and bore the girl to a little grass-plot, sending Little Volcano after water, while she loosened the maiden's garments and bathed her brow with the few drops of whisky left in Coon's m-tal flask. The boy miner darted at full speed toward the creek as the nearest point where he felt sure of finding water, snatching up the driver's glazed sombrero as he started. He saw that the alarm had been given to the town, either by the report of fire-arms or the runaway horses, and now quite a crowd were hurrying at top speed toward the scene of the accident. Their questions fell upon unheeding ears, as the lad dashed by his only thoughts given to the fair young creature whom he had so strangely encountered, and in whom he felt such a deep interest.

He returned with the dripping hat, but found that his contents were not required. To his great joy he found the girl conscious, though still faint and bewildered. From a little distance he stood gazing upon her, his soul in his eyes. Even then, wan and blood-stained, her hair disheveled, her garments torn and disarranged, she seemed an angel of light in his eyes.

Suddenly he started and turned quickly, his face flushing hotly, then turning to a sickly pallor. He heard these words uttered in a low, drawing tone: "She'd make a mighty purty bit o' flesh, onct she was rigged up, you hear me? I've got the rocks as she won't live in Hard Luck two weeks afore she makes another outo Long Tom's string o' petticoats."

The tone, more than the words, stung Little Volcano. He read in them a foul insult to the young girl, sounding all the worse that she seemed now so helpless and defenseless.

The speaker was a tall, gaunt fellow, apparently middle-aged. His shoulders were broad, his arms muscular, but there was a looseness in his build, an awkward clumsiness in his carriage that matched well with the dull, sleepy, yet brutal expression of his long, bony face. The watery, bleared eyes of light blue had a slinking, foxey cast especially disagreeable.

All this the boy miner took in at a glance, and as quickly read the character of the man. His hand dropped from the revolver out upon which it had instinctively closed, though he had no notion of letting the insulting speech pass unnoticed.

Gleefully he tapped the man sharply upon the shoulder. Cowering beneath the touch, he shuffled aside, one hand seeking the revolver at his belt—the air and motion of a criminal who imagines he is "wanted." But as he noticed the comparatively slight figure of the lad—a mere boy, as he believed—his courage returned, and angry at his own fears, he sharply demanded, with an oath: "What yer want, you hear me, boy?"

"I'll tell you in a moment," was the quiet reply. "Maybe you would be so kind as to tell me your name?"

"What's it your business, you little tadpole on legs? The impudence o' some galoots—"

"Are you ashamed of it, that you dare not answer?" sneeringly interrupted Little Volcano, his eyes glowing.

"Shamed nothin'! My name's a man's name, shore pizen to little rips as puts on the airs of a man afore they've l-ft off brass-cloouts. Ga home, sonny, an' let yer mammy put ye to bed afore ye git a good round spankin' fer stickin' yer nose into men's business," and the fellow laughed loudly at his own smartness.

"Will you tell me his name, sir?" requested the boy miner, of a quiet-looking man standing near.

"Certainly—he calls himself Sleepy George now; but he changes his name every time he steals a horse or goes through a bunkhouse."

Again laughing loudly, though this time it sounded even more forced than before, the fellow repeated: "That's my name—Sleepy George—an' it's the name of a high-toned cuss too, you bet!"

It's the name of a dirty, foul-mouthed scoundrell," cried Little Volcano, stepping toward the bully.

"I heard your words a few moments ago, and unless you get down upon your knees and apologize for them, you'll never leave this spot until your friends—if such a low-lived covey has any friends—carry you off on a litter."

The sharp interchange of words had attracted the attention of the entire party, and the Hard-Luckians gathered around in hopes of a new sensation. Old Zimri Coon edged toward the big bully, one hand upon a revolver.

Sleepy George made a motion as though about to draw a pistol, but the low murmur that ran through the crowd warned him that such a course would result in an outbreak under which he would fare but ill. Still he could not retreat. He measured the little figure before him, and probably his first opinion was confirmed, for he lifted one huge foot and kicked viciously at the boy miner.

Little Volcano sprang past the foot, and leaping up, planted his fists, one—two, heavily in the bully's face. Small and delicate as those fists looked, they sounded like the stroke of a hammer against a half-dried hide, cutting to the bone, and Sleepy George went down like a log.

The "manly art" was a dead letter among the miners, as a rule. Where a log or steel were waived, "rough-and-tumble" was the usual method of deciding disputes, and knowing this, Little Volcano acted upon it without a scruple.

He sprang upon the fallen bully's breast, plying both fists in a hailstorm of blows that seemed enough to beat in a skull of iron. And so effective was the visitation that the little starts of surprise at the easy overthrow of the bully by a seeming boy, had scarcely time to subside, before Sleepy George, thoroughly cowed, begged for mercy.

Little Volcano removed the weapons from the man's belt, then arose, saying in a deep tone: "Kneel down, and beg my pardon. Say that you are a foul-mouthed liar. You know me now—if you are wise you will do as I bid you."

Though with an ill-grace, Sleepy George obeyed, and then slunk away, after one vindictive glare at his conqueror, amid the jeers and taunts of the crowd.

"You served him right, stranger," said the same man who had given the bully's name. "But you'd better sleep with both eyes open. That rascal is worse than a rattlesnake. He will strike you when you least expect it. And he has strong backing, too. As a friend, and he lowered his voice; 'as a friend and well-wisher, look out for Long Tom if y'u mean to stop long in town.'"

Little Volcano was about to ask him to speak clearer, when the arrival of a couple of fresh horses from the stage office, and the bustle occasioned by the righting of the coach and rigging a drag to serve in place of the wheel which had been broken, diverted his attention. But it was not long ere the warning was remembered.

He saw the young girl assisted into the stage, and though he dared not address her, he managed to attract Mrs. Champion's attention, and from her learned that Mary—the first time he had heard

her name—had escaped material injury, and would probably be none the worse for the double accident on the morrow. Right heartily he mounted beside old Zimri upon the stage, and once more the crowd of Hard-Luckians, who were loudly discussing the accident and the little play in which Sleepy George was so mercilessly handled. Despite his natural courage, Little Volcano could not entirely suppress a shudder as he overheard bets offered and taken on the number of days which would pass before the discomfited bully wiped out his defeat with a knife-thrust or a bullet from ambush.

A number of persons were standing before the door of the stage-office, when the coach rolled up. Among them was Sleepy George, standing behind a tall, finely-formed and well-dressed man, with the face of an archangel and the form of an Apollo.

As Mrs. Champion and Mary alighted, this man strode forward and lifted the veil that covered the maiden's face. Mary shrunk back with a little cry. Quick as thought Little Volcano sprang between them, thrusting the audacious fellow back. With a curse he thrust a hand into his bosom, but the same instant a revolver stared him in the face, and over the leveled tube a blue eye flashed back his look of hatred.

"Drop it, you overgrown warmint!" gritted old Zimri, leaping forward as Sleepy George drew a revolver. "Drop that weapon an' at—or I'll blow a hole in yer karkidge a mile could jump through!"

The crowd began to gather around, and again an ominous murmur rose. The tall man seemed to recognize it, and his expression changed like magic, as he said:

"I'll see you again, young man. I've got you down here, tapping his breast, then turning away.

The little, quiet man touched the boy miner's arm.

"Remember what I told you. That's Long Tom."

Little Volcano turned and followed old Zimri, feeling that he had made at least two bitter enemies that day.

CHAPTER V.

A STRANGE ACQUAINTANCE.

A CLEAR, bright morning. The air, cool and bracing, came down from the mountains, rustling the pines and o-dars, playing through the boughs of the red-wood, toying with the fragrant azaleas before sweeping down through the rocky gorges out upon the level, sandy wastes beyond.

Wild and magnificent was the scenery. Ruined castles of rock; with here and there a tower still standing, half hidden by the black cedars and clinging vines. But fortresses with their walls and outer defenses half demolished, ramparts battered and crumbling, eaten by the tooth of frost. A thousand defaced figures of a by-gone age—of monstrous statues in the remains of which a fanciful eye could still trace a resemblance to the weird, fantastic creations of ancient mythology.

But the desecrating touch of man was marred the whole. Unheeding the wild beauties surrounding him upon every hand, with eyes only for the especial object of his search, the prospector stalked the rocks, turned over the yellow clay, keenly watching for evidence of gold.

It was Little Volcano. For nearly a week he had been thus occupied, as yet with trifling success.

A sound—strange enough for that time and place, deep in the heart of the mountains—star-died him from his labor. The rapid clatter of iron-clad hoofs upon the rocky soil, coming from down the narrow defile.

The boy miner cast a rapid glance behind him. Twenty yards beyond lay the edge of a deep, dark pit rather than canyon, cutting across the little valley. Too wide for any mortal horse to leap, there was no way of passing it save by climbing

the side cliffs, and they were so nearly perpendicular that a cat could not have scaled them.

"A fool or a madman!" muttered the boy miner as he crouched down behind a clump of bushes; but the next moment he sprang erect with a sharp cry of warning.

A piebald mustang dashed through the opening into the "pocket." Its blood-red nostrils widely dilated, its eyes protruding, its counter covered with flakes of foam, the animal seemed fairly beside itself with terror.

Upon its back, firmly seated despite its frantic bounds, was a rider, young and fair; the long black hair broken from its fastenings, floating freely upon the breeze, the richly-rounded figure betrayed the woman, despite the fact of her being seated astride. Though pale as death, she seemed composed—strangely calm for one in the very arms of death. The broken reins dangled beyond her reach. The maddened mustang was entirely beyond her control.

Little Volcano had scant time for reflection. Ten seconds more would carry the horse and rider over the verge of the abyss, to most inevitable death upon the jagged rocks below. There was only one chance—a faint one, at the best.

Too greatly terrified to notice aught, the mustang did not swerve from its course as the boy miner sprang out from his covert. A low, appealing cry broke from the woman's lips that nerved the arm of Little Volcano, and with a quick aim he discharged his pistol at the animal's head just before it came abreast of him.

His aim was true, the bullet buried itself in the mustang's brain, but nothing short of a thunder-bolt could have checked its course in time to avoid the abyss.

One convulsive bound that flung its rider heavily from the saddle, then the death-ticken animal tottered upon the verge of the pit for a moment, ere plunging lifelessly down into the dark depths.

Little Volcano dropped his weapon and managed to partially break the young woman's fall, though her head and shoulders struck forcibly against the bowlder over which he stumbled. For a moment or two he himself was stunned and bewildered, while the lady lay bleeding and insensible across his breast.

His first remembrance was that of hearing again the mad trampling of horses' hoofs along the defile, and believing the noise to be caused by the enemy from whom he concluded the woman was fleeing, he sought to rise, but weakness prevented.

Still he managed to draw his other revolver, just as a horseman spurred into his pocket.

A hoarse cry broke from the stranger's lips as he caught sight of the prostrate figures, and wrenching up his animal with a grasp of iron, he leaped to the ground and lifted the woman to his bosom, covering her pale, blood-stained face with passionate kisses, mingling her name with prayer to the Holy Virgin for her recovery.

Little Volcano realized his mistake, and put up his weapon, seating himself upon the bowlder to which he owed the painful and swelling bump upon his head.

While the man was endeavoring to restore his lifeless burden, Little Volcano gazed upon him with quickening interest. And as he looked he became convinced that this was no common character. A figure something above the medium height, compactly, yet not of remarkably muscular build, to a casual glance. Nevertheless, as time passed on, Little Volcano was to learn what almost marvellous powers were concealed beneath that unassuming exterior.

His face, though dark-skinned, was handsome, with clear cut, and determined features. High-arched brow, a drooping mustache, bro pointed beard, together with hair that fell over his shoulders in profusion, were jetty black save where a keen eye could pick a thread of silver here and there. His garments were those of a Mexican ranchero, of finest broadcloth, embroidered linen and muslin, though bearing evidence of rough usage in sundry rents and stains.

This much Little Volcano noted, then a little cry broke from his lips as he saw the woman's eyes open with a wondering stare. Quick as thought the Mexican turned toward him, a drawn pistol in his hand, and the boy miner distinguished the words:

"You alive—never alive!"

"Easy, there, stranger!" cried the boy miner, sharply, throwing up one hand. "Don't you know your friends are near?"

"I am your friend—I know no other. But—who are you? Why are you spying around here?"

"That's rather cool!" cried Little Volcano, with a half-laugh, though the red deepened upon his cheek. "I might better ask you that question, since I have been in this place since yesterday noon. And let me tell you, my friend, if I hadn't been spying around here, as you call it, the odds are that you would have had to look for your lady friend where her horse has gone—down the canyon yonder."

"The true—he speaks true—he saved my life!" broke in the woman, her hands fringing herself and tottering toward Little Volcano, stinking at his feet and covering his hands with passionate kisses.

Her ardor frightened the boy miner far more than had the threatening looks of the Mexican, and he blushingly disclaimed her thanks.

"Is this true?" asked the man, in a voice that trembled, despite his efforts at self-control.

"So far as shooting the horse—yes. But as for saving the lady, I fear she got an awkward fall over this rock. That was all—"

"It was everything—in saving her life, you saved mine, for I could not live without her. Senor, I am poor, without friends or country—men call me a devil, forgetting that if I am such, 'twas their cruelty and injustice made me one. Bad as I am, I have still a heart—it is here!" and he drew the slight figure again to his breast. "I have no words to thank you—but they are here in my heart. Some day you may read them. Until that day I can only say, sir, I thank you from my soul!"

"That's more than enough, friend, for the little I was able to do. I'm only sorry that I could not save her from injury—and the mustang, too. It was a fine brute—"

The Mexican interrupted his speech with a torrent of curses so terrible and blasphemous that the boy miner, despite the rough and reckless life he had led for years, could scarcely keep from shuddering.

The cursing was cut short by the woman's sinking to the ground with a cry of pain as she attempted to stand alone. Now that the momentary excitement of thanking her preserver was past, she could no longer bear up against her injuries, far more serious than any had imagined.

Nerving himself with what seemed like the icy calmness of despair, the Mexican examined her hurts, finding her side, shoulder and head terribly bruised, though as far as he could tell no bones were broken. Little Volcano turned aside with a delicacy that did him honor, but could not result in his work, much less leave the spot until he learned the result of his strange adventure.

Despite his momentary feeling of disgust at the man's blasphemy, he found himself deeply interested in and longing to know more about him. Could he have guessed all that was to follow the acquaintance so strangely made, he would have taken to his heels like a terrified jack-rabbit.

"She can not ride—the trail is long and rough—she would die before I could carry her there," muttered the Mexican, glancing wistfully toward the boy miner. "Senor, you look kind-hearted—may I trust you? I know not what else to do."

"I'll help you in any way, don't be fearful," smiled Little Volcano. "It would be a mercy to me—I've been grubbing here like a mole until I am tired—and not a sign of pay-dirt."

of the water drowned every other sound. Then with a rush, faster than a galloping horse, the mighty wave swept past them, and went tearing down the river-bed. Behind it was a dark torrent, full of fallen trees shooting past, tumbling one over the other in wild confusion under the still starlight. Where a great chasm had existed before, now was a full rushing river; and they could hear the great wave roaring onward on its destructive course, miles away, crashing and tearing along, the sound sinking into a distant murmur at last, while the river became calm, and they could only tell how rapidly it was going by watching the great logs, that from time to time shot past, with lightning velocity.

The great river Athara was up, and the rains had come on the mountains of Abyssinia, swelling it so suddenly from a thousand rivulets. "And in a few days more," said Manuel, thoughtfully, "the Nile will rise, from Khartoum to Alexandria, and the black mud that has traveled all the way from the equator will settle on the fields of Egypt till all the land will rejoice. Fellows, it is time we were off. We have seen enough of this country."

They very soon found that Manuel was right. As Sheikh Haroun had predicted, the rising of the river was soon followed by the rains, which were nothing but tremendous torrents, that penetrated the tents as if they had been sieves. Our travelers were very glad to load up and travel away from the region of rain into the lower plains. It took them several days rapid marching, in which they were accompanied by the Hamraus, both parties camping and hunting together. The face of the country had undergone a change, as if by magic. Before, everything had been parched and withered, the grass burnt up, the trees dry and brown, not a sign of game anywhere, except close to the river. Now the fresh young grass was shooting up in all directions, antelopes of fifty different kinds were scattered about here and there, and the graceful heads of the giraffes could be seen in clusters by the tall mimosas. The elephants had retired to the deeper forests, but rhinoceroses were plenty, and lions seemed to be even more numerous. Every thicket seemed to hold one, lying asleep by the half-devoured body of some game slain the night before; and the sight grew so common that our boys ceased to fire at them, after they had collected eight lion skins in the first morning. The river was full of hippopotami, rejoicing in plenty; and all nature had undergone a grateful change.

But after about three days' march, they began to get out of the influence of the rainy season, as they approached Khartoum. Here they were once more at the edge of the desert, and everything was scorching and barren, away from the river bank. They encamped near the town, and the governor of Khartoum, hearing they were there, came out to welcome them back. The governor was wonderfully polite to the Hamraus. He had often heard of their tribe, and was very anxious to cultivate their friendship, as the viceroys of Egypt wished to extend his dominions further south, and the good offices of a powerful tribe like the Hamraus would be very useful.

A grand reception was accordingly held, in front of Manuel's tent, the distinguished American strangers being the entertainers of all parties.

Sheikh Haroun, clothed in a long robe of crimson silk, presented him by the governor, whose name was Achmet Pasha, was smoking a long chibouque, or Turkish pipe; the pasha, in a magnificent uniform, flashing all over with gold lace, sat between the sheikh and Manuel; Abou Hassan and Abdallah, with others of the principal Arabs, were seated cross-legged, with Curtiss and Ballard, smoking and chatting. The conversation soon turned on the tribes to the south and west of them, and on the mysterious White Nile, which came from no one knew where. Manuel had heard of the discovery of the great lake Nyanza, which had been assumed as its source, and a keen desire began to possess his mind to find out for himself the great problem, and to go where no one else had been. He felt certain that if there was a lake, such as described by Speke and Baker, there must also be some river flowing into that lake, if not many such rivers. The largest of these would then be the true source of the Nile.

The conversation turned on it in this wise: MANUEL. "Can any here tell whence comes the great Bahr el Abiad? (The White Nile). The Athara we know, but whence is the Bahr el Abiad?"

SHEIKH HAROUN. "No one can fathom the decrees of Allah. It comes from the south, among a people that have eyes in their stomachs, and others with dogs' heads on their shoulders. We know no more."

MANUEL. "Cannot the pasha tell us more? Surely he knows of the English traveler that went by there but a year or two ago, and came back, saying he had found the source of the Nile."

PASHA. "The American effendi (gentleman) is right. Such a man came by, a tall man, as strong as a buffalo, with a beard like the lion's mane. He had a lady with him, and went to the south. He came back safe once. His highness the khedive has sent him off again, and no one has heard of him since he reached Gondokoro."

Manuel recognized in this description the celebrated traveler, Sir Samuel Baker, a man of great size and strength, who had not been heard of for some time. He asked, therefore: "Suppose I go with my friends here to look after this traveler—can you furnish us with guides, my lord the pasha?"

PASHA. "I can give you guides as far as Khordofan. There you will have to find others."

SHEIKH HAROUN. "Beware, my son, of going among those accursed people with the dogs' heads. They will devour you, of a surety."

MANUEL (smiling). "My father is too cautious. Before I left home, I promised my kinsmen that I would go where no one else had ever been. Now this traveler has plainly been up the Bahr el Abiad; therefore I will go to the westward and south, where no one has been."

SHEIKH HAROUN. "You will never get there, my son. There is a powerful and mighty prince there, who lives many moons' journey to the south-west, who kills all strangers, and whose people ride on elephants. No one has ever succeeded in reaching there, and come back to tell of it."

MANUEL. "Then there will I go, and come back the first. But how know you that the people ride on elephants if no one has ever come back to tell of it?"

SHEIKH HAROUN. "People have been to the borders of the river that separates this kingdom from the rest of the world, and have seen the terrible strangers across the river, on their elephants. They live in palaces, such as the giants once built along the great river to the north."

Manuel began to be greatly interested. He had known that there were vague traditions in

all parts of Africa, about a people somewhere in the interior "who rode on elephants." Here the same tradition again met him from the mouth of the old Arab chief, who was very cautious of his words.

"Which of you will go along with me?" he continued. "I will reward him handsomely when I come back, and make his tribe rich."

"I will go with my white brother," said Abou Hassan, suddenly. "He has been good to me and mine, and I will accompany him to death."

"And so will I," joined in Selim and Abdallah.

"It is well," said Manuel. "My Arab brothers shall be well treated. When will the pasha give us a guide to Khordofan?"

PASHA. "Whenever their American excellencies please. However, I would not advise their trying to find the hidden country. No one has gone there within my lifetime, and there are only doubtful stories of people who went there many years ago. Their excellencies cannot always believe such stories. There is such a country, but it may be too far off to be reached."

MANUEL. "Wherever it be, I am going to find it. I will go where no one else has been before me, and find out if there be really such a people as they say lives there."

PASHA (politely). "Allah be with your undertaking. You shall have all the help I can give you."

And accordingly, the next few days were consumed in preparations for the march into the unknown regions. The Egyptian servants were all dismissed, and desert Arabs hired, with their camels, to convey the baggage of our travelers. Abou Hassan and his Hamraus here proved invaluable. The lads knew that they could be depended on if it came to a fight, which was very possible where they were going, and the Hamraus took care to pick out men that they knew, from the numerous Arabs offering their services, for camel-drivers, grooms, etc.

When the party was finally made up, to cross the desert to Khordofan, it was sufficiently formidable to resist any ordinary attack. Abou Hassan and his two brothers were a host in themselves, and had persuaded three other Hamraus to join them. Manuel had given them all long Turkish muskets, which are quite cheap at Khartoum, with which the Arabs were delighted. All of his camel-drivers and servants were armed in the same manner, and he and his two friends were furnished with breech-loaders and revolvers.

Their little caravan was compact and carefully loaded, composed of thirty camels, all told. The Hamraus and the Arab grooms were all mounted on good horses, and our three friends had the best mounts of all, the incomparable, swift, tireless onagers.

"Ho! for the hidden land!" cried Jack Curtiss, gayly, as they bounded out of the gate of Khartoum, ahead of their caravan. "Who says we won't reach it?"

"No one," responded "Plug." "They haven't had any Yanks in this vicinity for a long time. We'll show them the way to do it."

And the caravan passed on to the west bank of the Nile, and struck into the dreary Lybian desert.

CHAPTER XVI. THE HIDDEN PEOPLE.

The low, mud walls of the city of Khordofan rose from the midst of a broad plain, now covered with short grass in the freshness of the rainy season. Flocks and herds, of sheep, goats and camels, covered the plain as far as the eye could see, all moving to the north, to escape the advancing rains, and follow returning verdure. Through the midst of these herds the caravan of our travelers pushed its way to the great gate of the city, passing groups of wild desert Arabs, on horses and camels, driving their herds to the north. Abou Hassan told Curtiss, that all the tribes of the Lybian desert migrated in this way from south to north, and back again, to follow the pasturage at different times of the year.

Inside the town they found long, narrow streets, winding here and there, low huts, built of mud and thatched with millet straw, and a great bare market-place in the center of the city, where the merchants went into camp with their caravans, and trafficked in ivory and gold-dust, ostrich-feathers and palm-oil, and slaves from the interior.

Our friends were very much interested in everything they saw. There were caravans there from all over the recesses of Central Africa, merchants from Bornou, with jetties faces and enormous turbans, that seemed as if three ordinary blankets were rolled into each; tall, muscular negroes from Kooka and Kanem, and the countries that border Lake Tchad, and one little party of merchants from the Shoa tribe of Arabs, that dwell on the Shary river.

These were the most interesting of all to our travelers. They came from that mysterious region where no white man had yet been; and beyond them, by common tradition, lay the country of the "elephant-riders." Manuel at once opened communication with these Arab merchants, and began to question them about this mysterious country. He invited them to a feast at his *caravanseraï* that evening, and the Shoa merchants came. A *caravanseraï* is the substitute, in Mohammedan countries, for our hotels. It consists of a vast open court, surrounded with buildings, which are divided into little bare stone cells. This is all the accommodation given, but it is enough in that climate, and it costs about a cent a day. Provisions and fuel have to be procured at the market, and every traveler brings his own bed, which is but a piece of carpet, or a mat and a cloak.

Here, on the evening of their arrival in Khordofan, our travelers were seated, in the court or the *caravanseraï*, with the Shoa merchants and the Hamrau chiefs, smoking their long chibouques and drinking coffee out of tiny cups, while the unloaded camels knelt all round them.

The Shoa merchants were very unlike the negroes. Their complexion was a light copper-color, and they had heavy beards, their faces were regularly aquiline, and they were fine-looking men. Their hair, however, was frizzed in a very curious manner, standing out nearly a foot from the heads of its wearers, which were without any other covering. The Shoa were long robes, and carried clumsy scimitars with them, but no fire-arms.

After many compliments passing, Manuel opened the conversation concerning the country he longed to hear about.

MANUEL. "We are going to travel toward your country, very soon. We have heard of the valor and worth of the Shoa from afar, and have resolved to come and see them."

SHOA MERCHANT. "My lord will be very welcome. We have but a little, but that little all belongs to my lord."

MANUEL. "Your tribe feed their flocks on the banks of the Shary—is it not so—to the south of the Lake Tchad?"

SHOA. "We do. The sultan of Bornou makes us pay tribute, but he protects us from our enemies."

MANUEL. "And what people lie again to the south of you?"

SHOA. "The black people of the little mountains. They are robbers, but they have no arms, and live in caves."

MANUEL. "How can they rob, if they have no arms?"

SHOA. "They have nothing but knives, and they creep into our camps at night, and stab us asleep. But if a good watch is kept, there is no danger."

MANUEL. "And how do these people live?"

SHOA. "They run down the young buffaloes, when they catch them alone, and stab them. They are as swift as horses."

MANUEL. "You interest me greatly. And what people live beyond them again?"

SHOA. "Beyond them lie the great mountains, whose tops reach heaven, covered with eternal snow. There is but one pass through these mountains, and on the other side lies the great river of the south, that flows through the country of the white people."

MANUEL (much interested). "The country of the white people? What white people?"

SHOA. "We cannot tell. No one has ever been there and come back. They ride on elephants, and live in palaces, but they will let no one cross the river to see their country. They live alone."

MANUEL. "I have heard of these people before. Tell us what you know about them. Have they guns, as we have?"

SHOA. "We cannot tell. We think not. No one has ever been through the dark pass to see, since our grandfathers were children."

MANUEL. "Did any one ever go, then?"

SHOA. "My grandfather has told me that he once saw a man who had been among them, and who escaped. He said that they made him a slave, and put him to work on a temple, where the columns were so big, that twenty men, with joined hands, could only just grapple them. That they had rows of statues miles long, of lions with women's heads, and elephants with castles on their backs; and that their armies marched to the sound of music, with swords and spears and shields. But who can tell if it be true or not?"

MANUEL. "Will you guide me to this country?"

SHOA (astonished). "Nay; it were tempting Allah to do it. They will kill us all."

MANUEL. "Will you guide me to your own country, then?"

SHOA. "Most surely we will, and be much honored to see the great strangers from over the sea. We are going to leave here, and go back, in three days."

MANUEL. "By that time we will be ready. God be with you."

SHOA. "The blessing of Allah be on your lordship. We will retire, for it grows late."

And the little party broke up, with profound bows on both sides, when Manuel and his friends proceeded to discuss the news, in their own language.

The tidings of a wonderful people that lived in the very heart of Africa, sufficiently advanced in civilization to have tamed the elephant, were growing more certain at every step. Whether they had guns or not, seemed to be doubtful, as also the situation of the country. It was in the midst of that bare spot on the map of Africa, still denominated the *Unexplored Region*, and fancy was at liberty to clothe the picture in any colors that suited the taste.

"What could he mean by 'rows of statues a mile long, of lions with women's faces'?" asked Curtiss, suddenly. "The people can't be Egyptians, can they? How could they get there?"

MANUEL. "I have a theory on that point, Jack, which this may perhaps confirm. I have seen, in Herodotus, a passage, saying, that Psammethichus, the last Egyptian king, who was driven out by Cambyses of Persia, took an army of four hundred thousand men, and marched off up the Nile into the interior. He was never heard of again, he nor his army. I have always thought that some portion of that army must have founded a colony somewhere in the interior, and perpetuated Egyptian civilization. It may be possible that these are the descendants of that Egyptian army, who have kept themselves isolated from the world, like the Chinese, to preserve their nationality. It is certain that Dr. Livingstone traces a great likeness to the Makalolo and other southern tribes, to the Egyptian sculptures. These strange people have probably mixed with the negroes of the south at some time, while keeping their main race pure in their own country. But we shall see when we get there. Are you all willing to take the risk?"

BUTLAND. "Ay, my boy! We'll follow you anywhere you please. Life's short. Let's see all we can. Hooroar for the Egyptians!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 222.)

INCENTIVE.

BY JOHN GOSPIP.

In many a life I hold it true
(I know in mine I surely)
How frequently the best we do
Seems but another's poorest.

Yet if we read this sign aright
And take to heart its teaching,
There is no place upon God's right
That is beyond our reaching!

Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

NOTES OF THE DAY.

GREAT changes are in progress for the campaign of 1877, and from present appearances it would really seem as if the present season was but a preparatory one for that yet to come. The rules of the League Association which admit of players being bargained with and engaged for another year at any time during an existing season, do not work advantageously for the interest of the League clubs. One effect is to destroy the morale of nine whose players have already been engaged by opposing clubs for the ensuing season. A few conscientious players will, of course, do their work faithfully even though engaged to play in another nine for the next season; but the effect on the majority is unquestionably demoralizing, as experience has plainly shown.

On July 28d, an article appeared in the New York Herald headed "Caught at Last," in which Seibert, the base-ball pool-seller of the metropolis, is implicated in an alleged effort to bribe Mathews to sell games while on the Western tour. According to the Herald scribe Seibert acknowledged the corn and pleaded that pool-sellers, as a class, always went in for all such chances. This is an important admission and it should admonish the League Association to adopt, at the next meeting, the most stringent laws against pool-selling in connection with their games.

Hartford has been stirred to its center by the report that the Hartford team engaged for 1877 is to be bodily transferred to Brooklyn, there to compose a strong, reliable metropolitan team for

1877, something the city has not had since the palmy days of the old Atlantic nine. The new team will be managed by Mr. Buckley in connection with Mr. Cammeyer, and it will be captained by Ferguson. The nine will be Harbidge, Bond, Start, Burdock, Ferguson, Carey—or Pearce—York, Pike and Higham, with Holdsworth, Booth, etc. It will be seen that the majority will be Atlantic players, and that fact will give it the title of the "Atlantic club, of Brooklyn." Such a team has long been wanted in Brooklyn, and the effect will be to inaugurate a new era of professional play in the City of Churches. The Mutual club will go out of existence.

The Bostons have a cunning pitcher in the person of W. B. White, James Whites' brother. He was pitcher of the Live Oaks in 1875.

The St. Louis nine for 1877 will include Clapp, Nichols, Dohman, Pearce and Battue, in the in-field, and Rensen in the out-field.

The Athletics in 1877 will have Bradley as their pitcher, with Fister, Meyerle, Force and Sutton in the in-field, and Hall and Egger in the out-field.

The Bostons will have Braun, Manning, Murnan, Morrill, Schafer, George Wright, Leonard and O'Rourke of their present team in 1877.

Cincinnati is to have Hicks, Mathews, Jones, Foley, Hallinan and Kessler of their present team in 1877.

The Louisville will retain Snyder, Devlin, Gerhardt, Palmer and Hastings of their present, with Mills of the Hartford.

Bechtel has been reinstated by the Louisville and his resignation accepted. This will enable him to play in another club next season.

Mr. Cammeyer was "interviewed" while out West, and this is what he had to say, according to a Western journalist's account: When asked if it was true that Hicks, Mathews and Hallinan had been engaged to play with the Cincinnati next year, he said: "Yes, that is true. The boys came to me and said, 'Mr. Cammeyer, we have been offered so-and-so (\$2,000 and the like) to play next year in Cincinnati. Now what can you do for us? We don't want to leave home. We all like to live in Brooklyn, but we have received offers of more money than we now make, and we must consult our own interests.' Well, I said to them, 'boys, I would be sorry to see you leave, but if you have received such offers take them. They are better than I can do for you.' Joe Start is also going to leave to join the Hartford. If I was to say to him, 'Joe, stay,' he would do it. But that would not be doing him justice, so I let them go as I do the others. In fact, I am thinking about letting them all go, and getting an entire new set of men for next season. I run that Mutual club alone and unaided. I have to bear all the expenses and take my chances of getting even. I pay salaries to four men, and the others get a share of the gate money. Their pay does not equal that received by men in other clubs, and the consequence is that they get picked off every year, and I have to come in after everybody else has had their pick, and take what is left. The best players in the business would be glad to come here to play, if they could get anything like the salaries they get elsewhere. But Brooklyn is not Chicago, or Boston, or St. Louis, or Cincinnati. Why, an officer of the Chicago club told me, that if they needed money beyond their receipts, he could go out through the city, dull as the times are, and collect fifty thousand dollars in half a day. This is the best baseball city in America. We have had crowds of twenty thousand people attend games in past years. The Union ground is the finest that exists to-day, but we have the poorest seating accommodations. With a stock company and a good wine engaged, first-class seating arrangements could be at once perfected, and next season would witness a return of the old-time enthusiasm among the people of Brooklyn and New York."

The League pennant record to July 24th is as follows:

Clubs.	Athletic.	Boston.	Chicago.	Cincinnati.	Hartford.	Indians.	Los Angeles.	Madison.	Mutual.	St. Louis.	Union.
Athletic	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Boston	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Chicago	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Cincinnati	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Hartford	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Indians	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Los Angeles	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Madison	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
Mutual	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		
St. Louis	4	1	1	0	0	3	0	11	37		

Games lost..... 26 19 7 32 10 23 21 12 15 306

Games drawn..... 1 0 0 0 1 3 1 0 0 6

It will be seen that St. Louis occupies second place for the first time this season.

INDISPUTABLE EVIDENCE.

St. Elmo, Ill., July 8, 1874.
R. V. PIERCE, M. D., Buffalo, N. Y.—I wish to add my testimony to the wonderful curative properties of your Alt. Ext., or Golden Medical Discovery. I have taken great interest in this medicine since I first used it. I was badly afflicted with dyspepsia, liver deranged, and an almost perfect prostration of the nervous system. So rapid and complete did the Discovery effect a perfect cure that it seemed more like magic and a perfect wonder to myself, and since that time we have never been without a bottle of the Discovery and Purgative Pellets in the house. They are a solid, sound family physician in the house and ready at all times to fly to the relief of sickness—without charge. We have never had a doctor in the house since we first began to use your Pellets and Discovery. I have recommended the use of these medicines in several severe and complicated cases arising from, as I thought, an impure state of the blood, and in no one case have they failed to more than accomplish all they are claimed to do. I will only mention one as remarkable (though I could give you dozens). Henry Koster, furniture dealer of this place, who was one of the most pitiful objects ever seen, his face swollen out of shape, scales and eruptions without end, extending to the body, which was completely covered with blotches and scales. Nothing that he took seemed to affect it a particle. I finally induced him to try a few bottles of the Golden Medical Discovery, with daily use of the Pellets, assuring him it would surely cure him. He commenced its use some six weeks since, taking two Pellets each night for a week, then one each night, and the Discovery as directed. The result is, to-day his skin is perfectly smooth, and the scaly eruptions are gone. He has taken some seven or eight bottles in all, and considers himself cured. This case had baffled the skill of our best physicians. Messrs. Dunford & Co., druggists of this place, are selling largely of your medicines, and the demand steadily increases, and they give perfect satisfaction in every case.

Respectfully,
W. H. CHAMPLAIN,
Agt. Am. Exp. Co.

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A few advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

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One Grand Cash Gift.....	20,000
One Grand Cash Gift.....	10,000
One Grand Cash Gift.....	5,000
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100 Cash Gifts of 500 each.....	50,000
100 Cash Gifts of 400 each.....	40,000
100 Cash Gifts of 300 each.....	30,000
100 Cash Gifts of 200 each.....	20,000
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IN SUMMER TIME.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

I seek for rest 'mid somber shades,
Which from the din can curtain me;
I fain would lie and dream the hours
Of summer days both warm and free.

The forest moans, the air is fresh,
And all around the flowers bloom.
And from their bells by breezes tossed
So sweetly steals their rich perfume.

The fever from my brow departs
As, leaf-fanned, I in slumber sink;
All cares are lost and fancy reigns.
My soul can Nature's beauties drink.

The bird upon the bending bough
Gives me a tender serenade,
Which others answer from afar
And fill with song the shady glade.

As hours glide the heat grows less,
And all refreshed again I wake;
I rise and homeward turn my steps
By harvest fields and through the brake.

And when the sun is in the west,
To give the day a parting glance,
It glids the landscape with its smile
Which doth its beauties all enhance.

And now I know another day
Of song and sunshine's past and gone;
Too soon the autumn leaves will fall
Upon the green and fragrant lawn.

And I shall seek the glade no more,
Deserted by both bird and leaf;
While summer flowers scentless lie,
I, too, will learn that life is brief.

The Men of '76.

FRANKLIN.

The Printer, Patriot and Philosopher.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

DEAR old Ben Franklin! What loving memories his name inspires! For his clear head, his humane wisdom, his calm courage, his good works, America owes an everlasting expression of its admiration, and for the share his hand, heart and brain performed in developing and shaping the true republic we owe eternal gratitude. In years, in wisdom, in familiarity with English statesmen and English laws, he was literally the father of the Congress which declared our independence, and when the unequal struggle was inaugurated, to his sagacity, character and personal influence did that Congress turn to aid it in obtaining French co-operation—without which the struggle must have been in vain. At home and abroad the same simple-hearted, quaint, wise man, he moves through the history of a half century as a grandly representative man—the mere statement of whose services to mankind, to science, and to his country would fill up all our allotted space. "In breadth of mind," says Whipple, the essayist, "he is probably the most eminent man that our country has produced; for, while he was the greatest diplomatist and one of the greatest statesmen and patriots of the United States, he was also a discoverer in science, a benignant philanthropist and a master of the rare art of so associating words with things that they appeared identical."

Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston, January 17th, 1706. His father, a sturdy "non-conformist," was a soap and candle maker, with seventeen children, of which brood Benjamin was the fifteenth. Of course his wrestle with a rough fate was assured, and after a brief period at a common grammar school, in which he displayed fine powers of mind, his father's poverty compelled the lad to take his place, at ten years of age, in the chandlery. This employment proved so disgusting that his father, after two years' trial, and fearful that Ben would run away to sea as his brother Josias had done, gave the boy his choice of trades. That of cutler was first adopted but soon abandoned, and then, after much persuasion, little Ben, only twelve years old, was "indentured" as an apprentice to his eldest brother for a term of nine years, until he was "of age"—he to receive wages only during the last year of his apprenticeship!

In those days an apprenticeship meant years of unpaid toil under legal restraints and bonds that made the apprentice almost a veritable slave, so Ben only endured "that was the common heritage of boys of his time. His brother having established a weekly paper in Boston—the second weekly journal in America—Ben was soon deeply interested in the "matter" which passed under his hands, while in the books he was able to obtain his inordinate taste for reading and study was so fully gratified that when he was sixteen he had traveled over an amazing deal of ground—from Bunyan to Xenophon's *Memorabilia*.

From reading Shaftesbury he imbibed "skeptical" ideas which greatly impaired his standing with his rigidly orthodox father. Toward his brother he felt ill enough, for, what with abuse, hard work and jealousy the active-minded boy had a pretty hard time, and rejoiced at a circumstance which nominally gave him his freedom.

The paper having published something that gave offense was prosecuted for libel, so to save it from attachment Ben's indentures were canceled, and the paper was published in his name for a few weeks. When the affair was settled Ben refused to be re-indentured, and secretly embarked on a vessel bound for New York. Finding nothing to do there he started out, on foot, for Philadelphia, and reached the Quaker-town with a little pack on his back, tired and foot-sore, with but one dollar in his pocket—a strange boy in a strange town. He found employment as a compositor, and his remarkable intelligence soon brought him to the notice of Sir Wm. Keith, Governor of Pennsylvania.

How he was induced by Keith to go over to London—his adventures in that great city—his return to Philadelphia as a dry-goods clerk—his resumption of his place at the case, and his finally starting a paper, we can not here chronicle. That experience in London forms one of the most interesting chapters of his early life. It did much to fix his principles and greatly expanded his knowledge of the world and life.

In the paper he soon made his mark, and before he was twenty-five years of age was a distinguished man in the province. His practical intelligence, his earnest efforts in behalf of all philanthropic or public enterprises, his interest in schools, libraries and literary associations gave him much prominence in a city then somewhat destitute of these beneficent adjuncts of progress. Still a great reader, at the age of twenty-seven he commenced the study of French, Spanish and Italian, and soon after added Latin. He started, in 1741, *The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle*. In 1742 he invented the well-known Franklin stove, for which he refused a patent on the ground that such inventions should be for the common good. He was the originator and founder of the Pennsylvania University, of the American Philosophical Society, and a leading spirit in founding the Pennsylvania hospital. Happening in Boston in 1746, he witnessed, for the first time, some exhibitions of the then newly discovered

but uncomprehended power or agent of electricity. His ingenious mind at once elaborated their experiments, and by flying a kite of silk in a storm, held by a silken string, he succeeded in bringing the lightning from the clouds, thus identifying electricity and lightning, and demonstrating its conductivity and fluid character. Thereupon he suggested lightning rods for the protection of houses.

A recognized friend of liberty, of conscience, thought and speech, he naturally became a champion of liberty in State, and was chosen to represent Pennsylvania in the first Congress of the provinces, called to meet at Albany, June 14th, 1754—suggested by the British cabinet, in view of the approach of another war between Great Britain and France. The idea of the ministry was for the colonies to form a union for common protection against the Indians and French. On his way Franklin conceived the plan of such a union; and as chairman of a committee of one from each colony he reported the scheme, which was substantially adopted and was signed by the delegates, July 4th—twenty-two years before the Declaration of Independence.

In 1751 Franklin was appointed, without his own personal solicitation, Deputy Postmaster-General for the colonies. He organized a system of mails by horseback carriers, which gave great satisfaction.

He advanced large sums of money, from his private purse, to purchase horses and wagons for Braddock's expedition, and thereby suffered considerable loss in fortune. After that self-willed General's defeat, Franklin introduced a scheme for a *volunteer militia*, and taking a commission as "commander," raised a "corps" and went through a severe campaign. He was elected colonel of a regiment, as a crowning glory to his military experiences.

Colonel Franklin was sent to Great Britain in 1757, by the Pennsylvania Assembly, to act as "agent" for the province—a kind of minister, consul and defender of the colonies' rights. Such was his repute, that Massachusetts, Maryland and Georgia commissioned him to also act as their agent. He was, therefore, accredited at court, and his eminence as politician, diplomat and philosopher made him a welcome guest in all circles in Great Britain. The Scotch universities and Oxford conferred on him the degree of L. L. D., and the Royal Society elected him a Fellow.

He returned home in 1762, but the troubles with the mother country increasing, he was sent again as agent to the British court, in 1764, and extraordinary responsibility rested on him. He was to protest against the right of Parliament to tax the colonies, and to fight the Stamp Act from its inception, in 1765, to its repeal in 1766, with such vigor of logic and power of argument, that its repeal was due largely to his efforts. His examination before the House of Commons, as preliminary to the attempt of repeal, took place Feb. 23, 1766. The doctor's answers to searching interrogatories were so clear, his information so varied, and his knowledge of finance, government and international law so admirable, that "the effect was irresistible," we are told by an English historian, "and the repeal was inevitable."

This service to his country was followed by action even more decided. The Revenue acts of Parliament, of 1767, aroused him to a demeanor at once bold and threatening. His voice was not for war, but his denunciation of the act was accompanied with a half threat, half prophecy, that such measures would compel a resistance that surely would end in a final separation of colonies and mother country.

Up to 1775 he labored with so much zeal and pertinacity in fighting the ministry, with pen and tongue, wit and wisdom, as to greatly incense the king, ministry, and their supporters, and their persecutions and threats of arrest for sedition compelled him to leave the country. He reached Philadelphia only to be elected to the Continental Congress of 1775-6. Placed on the Committees of Public Safety and Foreign Relations, his labors were ceaseless. Congress leaned upon him, and he was, indeed, a tower of strength. His calm courage, his faith in the cause of Liberty, his willingness to make personal sacrifices, did more even than the hot patriotism of John Adams, or the resolute attitude of Richard Henry Lee, to bring Congress up to the point of declaring for total separation and independence.

He was on the Committee on the Declaration (see our paper on Jefferson), and signed that great Sermon on Human Rights, which his hand had helped to perfect. Then he was placed on the commission to France, along with Silas Deane and Arthur Lee, to procure arms, ammunition and aid—to obtain the right of harbor and refuge for American vessels in French ports—to solicit a loan of ten million francs, and, finally, to prevail on the French government to recognize the independence of the United States of America.

Though now seventy years of age, his vigor was unimpaired, and his countrymen all realized that if any man could induce the French king and ministry to espouse the cause of the colonies, it was the patriarch of patriots.

Franklin's services in France were signal. He wrote, talked, planned and worked so unrelentingly as to carry his points, one by one, until he had the proud satisfaction of seeing America and France in close alliance against their common enemy! His power was so commanding that, after Burgoyne's surrender, emissaries were dispatched from London to sound the sage as to terms of reconciliation of the colonies with the mother country, but his decided answer—nothing but complete independence would be considered—disposed of all efforts at "accommodating the differences."

"The Americans," he said, "were neither to be dragged nor bamboozled out of their liberty"—odd language, but which the British ministry and pig-headed king well understood.

When the Treaty of Alliance with France, effected by the commission, was announced, Franklin was named Minister Plenipotentiary to the French court, and so remained, greatly to his country's honor and interest, until the conclusion of peace in 1782. He was one of the commissioners for negotiating that peace, and at the close of the negotiation (Nov. 1782), requested to be recalled. Fifty years spent in the service of his country entitled him to release, now that the great end of independence was attained, but Congress could not spare him yet, so he tarried until 1785—negotiating, in the meanwhile, treaties with Sweden and Prussia.

We are told that, "His venerable age, his simplicity of manners, his scientific reputation, the ease, gaiety and richness of his conversation—all contributed to render him an object of admiration to courtiers, fashionable ladies, and savants." By the French people he was always received with enthusiasm, and throughout all Europe his fame was established, next

to that of Washington, as the most eminent living American.

Franklin returned in 1785, but not to retire to private life. He was elected President of Pennsylvania, and served as a delegate in the Federal Convention of 1787, which gave us our National Constitution. In the heated discussions which accompanied the construction of that great charter of Republican liberty, article by article, and section by section, his voice was ever for conciliation and harmony, and his influence conceded.

His infirmities of body increasing, in 1788 he retired wholly from public life, but as late as March, 1790, wrote a very admirable paper against slavery, to forward the movement of the Abolition Society, of which he was president. His disease—stone in the bladder—gave him much suffering, but he was clear-minded and composed to the last, dying April 17th, 1790.

Black Eyes and Blue;

OR,

The Peril of Beauty and the Power of Purity.

A TALE OF COUNTRY AND CITY.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN.

CHAPTER XIV.—CONTINUED.

ALL night Violet tossed on a couch of thorns. All night her persecutor tossed and sighed, as wakeful as she. Ethan Goldsborough did not like the manner of life he was living. It was foreign to his habits and distasteful to him in many ways. Yet he was in a frame of mind which demanded strong excitement to render life endurable. He could settle down to nothing. His wife was dead; he was severed from old friends; his pet, his Florence, was angry with him and hiding from him. He took a half-frenzied pleasure in driving Violet to despair; yet his conscience would not give him any peace for his conduct to her. He was like a dismantled ship, driven hither and yon by conflicting winds.

In consequence, he arose late the following morning, feverish, restless, eager to fly to the gaming-table. Ordering Violet to dress for the day as usual, they breakfasted in their sitting-room, and started for their haunt directly afterward. Eleven o'clock came and found M. Goldenough with the same run of bad luck which had commenced the previous evening. The more he lost, the larger the sums he staked on the next turn of the wheel. All the idle young men of the Spa dropped into the hall and lingered, in an interested group, about the banker and his beautiful, valet-de-chambre.

The baronet came, spoke to him, tried to draw him away to talk over their arrangements for the marriage and tour; but M. Goldenough shook him off, impatiently, telling him he must wait. Hours rolled on. One set of loungers was replaced by another. Sir Israel fretted, fidgeted, and grew yellow with anger and nervousness, as he saw the gold raked in by the *croupier* which should have been his.

At last, even Violet, who had sat behind him, indifferent as a stone, only so that Sir Israel was kept from approaching her too closely, became uneasy at the flushed face, sparkling eyes and reckless manner of her father; her little white hand, soft as a petal from a lily, rested on his arm, and a dozen infatuated youths bent to catch the low murmur of her voice, as she asked him, in trembling tones, to come away.

"Yes, yes, presently," he responded, in a loud, bullying voice. "I hope, by heaven, you don't think I'm afraid to lose a little money. Let me alone. We Americans never back down! no, by George! I will sit here until my last dollar is gone, if I choose. Who is going to interfere? Do you suppose I am scared at the loss of a thousand or two pounds? This is what I call jolly. Don't interfere with me, my girl."

Violet shrunk back in silence. Presently, however, she began to glance about her, through the folds of her thick veil, with more interest. Sir Israel Benjamin had become either hungry or angry, and had, at last, gone off. M. Goldenough was so absorbed in play that she might leave the hall, and he remain unconscious of her absence for an hour.

Her heart began to throb wildly. What if she should attempt, this moment, to free herself? Was there the least hope of success? A five-franc piece was all the money in her purse. She had a few rings on her fingers; one of them was set with a diamond which her mother had given her. The stone was not large; but it might be worth two hundred francs. Then she had with her a pair of plain gold bracelets and ear-rings.

Her father had threatened, in case she made an attempt to leave him, to have her arrested and immured as a person of unsound mind. She ran a terrible risk in venturing flight, through an unfamiliar country—a friendless girl, exposed to a thousand perils.

Something of the heroism which had supported Madame D'Eglantine through years of trouble, was inherent in her daughter's nature. Violet, after a minute's hesitation, resolved to do what she could to escape the snare spread for her. She arose very quietly, glided out of the hall and into the pleasure-grounds, lying hot and still under the afternoon sun. She was followed, at once, by half a dozen impetuous young bloods, eager to watch the movements of *la belle Americaine*. She was going, perhaps, to a meeting in the park, with the gay but ancient baronet. A young English man even went so far as to speak to her, overtaking her by an effort—as she flew along an avenue of the gardens, looking for the most unrequited paths. Affecting not to hear him she walked on more rapidly. A few minutes brought her out on to a street full of small shops, at some distance from the one frequented by the baronet and other fashionable loungers. In the window of one of these shops she saw a sign, in French, that money was loaned on jewels and personal property; she went in and effected a bargain, by which the shopkeeper obtained articles worth about five hundred francs for half that sum; but she was more than satisfied, and in great haste.

Out she hurried, pursuing her flight with only one conscious plan—to take the meanest streets, where she would be least likely to be looked for. It was only because the autumn wind flouted the garments in her very face, that she was led to enter another shop, in a Jew quarter, where second-hand clothing was kept for sale. She had not thought of disguise until the garments flapped in her face. A large woman advanced out of another room to meet her. Violet addressed her in French, and the woman answered in a sort of *patois* of French and German; but they managed to understand each other pretty well.

The eyes of the dealer glistened when the young lady offered to exchange her rich clothing for the garments of a peasant-girl, with a basket holding a few pieces of lace, that she might pass for one of the lace-workers of the country.

"Come in here, my dear mademoiselle; you

will be quite safe in this place until I make you one very good disguise," she said, eagerly, furtively feeling the thickness of Violet's black silk dress and counting up the price of her hat and costly mantle.

If any one saw the elegant demoiselle enter the poor shop they did not see her come out; but in about twenty minutes there emerged a young peasant-woman, in short petticoats, a laced bodice, wooden shoes, a high, broad hat, and with a lace-maker's basket on her arm.

The mistress of the shop had directed her how to find the railroad station, which was not far away, and toward it the wooden shoes went softly clattering.

As a train moved out of that station with the peasant lace-maker in a third-class car, Mr. Goldenough, at the sporting salon arose, with an oath and a laugh, from the table on which he had placed the last gold piece of all he had won in the month of his success: "We are just even," he said to the *croupier*. "Well! to-night we will take a new start. I never give up—it isn't in the blood," and then he looked about for the patient daughter who usually sat at his elbow—looked about, stared, grew as pale as he had been flushed, and went quickly off. Sir Israel Benjamin met him on the steps, they exchanged a few words, and walked into the gardens.

CHAPTER XV.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

CHARLIE WARD went the third time to see the policeman whom he had bribed before he received any information in return for his money; but on this third visit he was rewarded by the name and address of the lady whom he had seen riding out with the gentleman called by the officer Mr. Harold.

"I reckon there's something uncommon interesting about the affair, anyhow," remarked the man as he gave Charlie a card on which he had scrawled "Mrs. Fraser, No. 124 West—st." "I'm afraid Mr. Harold's been and gone 'an' got himself into another scrape. He's always in trouble with the fair sex. I've found out that the lady lives very quietly at this house, No. 124, as his wife. The lady who lets them the rooms only knows 'em by the name of Fraser—that's his given name, you see!—and she don't believe they're really married. As to that I can't say—I only know Mr. Harold ain't reckoned a marrying man, and that he keeps very still about it, if he is married."

"What is the name of the person who keeps the house?"

"Madame Florian. She's as tight as if she belonged to the detective force. I don't believe you'll get anything out of her. I've had a regular time finding out the little I tell you." "I hope I am mistaken in the identity of the lady—that this Mrs. Fraser may prove to be quite another person. But I am greatly obliged to you; and here is the additional fifty dollars you have earned."

"Thank you, sir; and if I can serve you any further let me know."

Charlie turned away from the officer with a heavy heart, which was so evident upon his frank features that the man, as he carefully disposed the greenback in his wallet, said to himself: "Pretty bad case o' broken heart, that! Harold has cut him out with the girl. That Harold's a gay one, now, ain't he? I wouldn't want him to get in my way if I was one o' them young fellows."

It was dusk when young Ward received the address from the policeman, and going to his boarding-house for his dinner, he had an hour for deliberation as to what steps he should now take. He felt almost absolutely certain that this Mrs. Fraser was Florence. The fear that she had already made shipwreck of her young life pained him almost as keenly as if she had been his own sister. In his mind she had always been associated with Violet; and both were near and dear and sacred to him. But, whatever had befallen Florence, it remained important for him to find her: poor Violet's restoration to her mother appeared to depend on Ethan Goldsborough's obtaining information of his daughter, and her receiving a gift from Madame D'Eglantine of one hundred thousand dollars. Charlie's feelings were of a most conflicting kind. He both hoped and feared the lady would prove to be Florence—hoped it, on Violet's account—feared it, on her own.

As soon as he concluded his nearly untasted dinner he went over to Sixth avenue, and took an up-town car to the street named on the card. His pulse throbbed unpleasantly in his temples as he rung the bell. A servant—a keen-looking, mulatto-girl—came to the door. He asked for Mrs. Fraser.

"Not at home, sah."

"Can I see Madame Florian?"

"Not at home, sah."

Charlie knew the girl was lying—for he walked up and down on the opposite side of the street for ten minutes and had seen the apartments on the second floor brilliantly lighted, while the shadow of a slender figure, walking restlessly about, had fallen more than once on the curtains. He stepped into the hall, having almost to thrust the servant before him, as she kept the door in her hand, purposely barring his entrance. Charlie cast a quick glance up the stairway; he was certain he saw a little form leaning over the railing in the dusk of the upper hall where the gas was turned down.

"I wish to see Mrs. Fraser very much. I have important news for her," he said, in clear, elevated tones meant for the ear above. "It is Charlie!" cried a silvery voice which thrilled through him. "Oh, Charlie! Charlie! How glad I am! Natalie, show Mr. Ward up this minute. He is an old friend of mine, and I must see him."

"Please to walk up," said the mulatto, with a wicked smile. "If missus counterdemand my orders it's all right," and the visitor sprang up the velvet-covered stairs with the same boyish eagerness with which he used to bound up the steps of Mr. Vernon's piazza to meet the two girls who so often walked together there.

A little figure stood in the open doorway of the brightly-lighted drawing-room—a little figure well-known to the eager eyes of the caller; and a little hand grasped his own warmly, a well-known voice murmured words of welcome, and Florence—the pretty little Florence of his student dreams—drew him into the magnificent apartment and closed the door between themselves and the over-curious servant.

Charlie could not speak for more than a minute. It was Florence, grown strangely beautiful, and robed in all the splendor of some fairy process. The room was luxurious with costly furniture and perfumed with the breath of lavish quantities of flowers. She stood in the midst of her superb surroundings, under the blaze of the branching chandelier, smiling at him with tears in her eyes. Her ruby-colored dress flowed away behind her in a long train; her lovely neck and arms—not fair, but smooth as satin, and of the rich tint of the true brunette—sparkled with jewels; a cluster of red blossoms nestled in her dusky, silken hair. Her great eyes glowed with the excitement of meet-

ing an old friend; but they filled quickly with tears, too, as she said:

"Oh, Charlie, how delightful it is to see some one that I know—an old friend—and from Lycurgus—dear old Lycurgus! But I thought, when I heard the bell ring, it was Fraser—my husband—and I sprang out into the hall. If you had come up-stairs then, you would have had my arms about your neck by mistake," she added, forcing a laugh.

"Your husband?" asked Ward, gravely.

"Yes, Charlie, I don't wonder you are astonished. I have been married six weeks to-day! Perhaps Fraser will come in while you are here; I hope he will, though he does not like me to have company. He wants me all to himself, I suppose," she said, smiling, as she brushed away two great tears about to fall. "Sit down, and tell me *everything*!"

She gave him a comfortable arm-chair, drawing a smaller one close in front of him where she might watch his lips as well as hear his words. Poor, homesick child! Fraser had not been near her for three days, and her heart was breaking under its silk and jewels; the sight of Charlie brought back, in a torrent, a thousand memories of the old life, the old home.

"Tell me first," she said, leaning toward him like an eager child, "have you heard anything of papa and mamma? I am very angry with papa, as you know; but I would give the world to see my mother. Is she in Lycurgus still?"

"Did you not see the advertisements I published a week or two ago?"

"No, no! If I had, I would have answered them. I am no longer hiding—except to please Fraser. You see, Charlie, blushing and hesitating, 'our marriage is a profound secret, and must be kept so for the present—on Fraser's account. But tell me about my mother. Sometimes I wish I never had left her as I did. But oh, Charlie, the blow was so sudden and cruel, and I was so proud! How did poor mamma bear it?"

A lump rose in the throat of foolish, boyish Charlie. It was hard to tell the eager questioner that her mother was lying in the grave to which trouble had driven her—harder to listen to the daughter's sobs, and cries of self-reproach, after he had broken as gently as possible the news to her.

"Wipe your eyes, dear Florence—do not sob so—listen to what I have to say. I came here to tell you of many things," he said, after she had given way to a wild burst of grief, lasting half an hour.

"Alas!" she replied, with a more tempestuous outburst of feeling, "I am all alone, Charlie—miserable, desperate! Fraser has not been near me for three days, and my mother is dead!"

Florence had no intention of betraying her husband's neglect—pride would have sealed her lips before Charlie—but in the agony of this new sorrow, it was wrong from her without her will.

Ward sprang from his chair, walking up and down the room in great excitement. At last he paused before the weeping girl.

"Florence, excuse so dreadful a question. As your friend—your protector, if need be, I ask it. I heard things before I came here which your confession of his neglect seems to corroborate. Are you sure that this Mr. Harold has not deceived you—that your marriage is valid in the eye of the law?"

Florence went to a little ebony casket on one of the tables, unlocked it and took from it her marriage certificate. She showed this to Charlie, and told him the whole story of her stay in Mr. Rhodes' house, her acquaintance with his friend Harold, and the wedding which followed. She did not even conceal—although she softened—the fact that to Mr. Rhodes' interference in her behalf she owed it that she was Harold's wife. "The clergyman," she said, "was one of eminent respectability, and so is Mr. Rhodes one of the most esteemed gentlemen in the city. It is all right—only Fraser feels that his father will be angry, and the old gentleman being very ill, he does not care to vex him."

"I am afraid," she continued, presently, with an air of the deepest melancholy, "that Fraser never really loved me—it was a passing fancy on his part, and he has already repented of his infatuation. He belongs to a very rich, very exclusive, very haughty family, which, he knows, will scorn me for my poverty and insignificance. But I do not care for his friends! I would curl my lip at them as haughtily as they at me, if Fraser only loved me. Oh, Charlie, what shall I do to keep the love which is slipping away from me? I would read, study, practice my music, make a gospel of the dearest of fashions, an art of dress; I would make any effort, perform any work, if thereby I might hold his affections. For I love him—I love him! I adore him! I would be the most devoted little wife the world ever saw if he would only allow it. I would fit myself for the company of his proud relatives. It is hard to be situated as I am! Charlie, I am an honest, pure, loving wife; yet the very servants sneer at me. They do not believe I am that gentleman's wife; and he allows them to regard me as not his wife! When I watch for him, and he does not come, and I grow pale, and my eyes red with weeping, they smile at my misery, as much as to say, 'You should have expected this; you must reap what you sow.' They bring up elegant dinners; but when I have to sit down to them alone I cannot eat; and they take them away with an air of amusement. It is true, as he says, that he cannot come so often as he would like, without betraying his marriage to those from whom he wishes to conceal it. But I am sure he could visit me more frequently if the *wish* were as strong as it once was. I wonder have I grown ugly in these six weeks! He used to rave about my beauty. Charlie, tell me the truth!—have I grown plain, homely, deformed, since you saw me last? Am I no longer beautiful?—no longer fit to be loved?"

She stood before him with her hands clasped, a look of piteous appeal in the lovely eyes whose dark lashes were beaded with tears, a picture of girlish charms as vivid as ever fired the soul of a painter. The color rushed into Charlie's face as he spoke, impetuously:

"You are twenty times more beautiful than ever, Florence! This man, who dares to neglect you so, is a scoundrel. I would like to kill him!"

"No—for then you would kill me, too. Good or bad I love him as he is. If I could but make him love me!"

"I have other things to tell you, Florence. Sit again, and let us have our talk out. We may not meet again for some time."

They resumed their seats, and her visitor narrated all that happened to the Vernons and Madame D'Eglantine, including, of course, the story of Violet's abduction by her father, his threats and the conditions upon which she was to be restored to her mother.

"So you see, Florence, that it is necessary I shall immediately inform Mr. Blank of your address, that he may confer with Mr. Goldsborough. Also, you will not be such a penniless bride, after all! Your portion will be a handsome one to bring, even to a Harold. You

*This plan, we may add, was rejected by the British Parliament because it gave too much power to the colonies, and was repudiated by the several Colonial Assemblies because it conceded too much power to the crown. In that rejection the two powers beheld their practical antagonism. It was the precursor of the Revolution.

need have no doubt that Madame D'Eglantine will pay it, for she is quite willing—more than willing. Indeed, now that your own mother is dead, I dare say, had you not married, she would at once have adopted you as Violet's sister, and made you share in everything equally with her. I cannot but regret your rash marriage. But it is done, and cannot be undone. I only hope that Mr. Harold will be more willing to acknowledge you when he learns that you are to have a large sum of money, and that some, at least, of your friends and relatives are more than a match for his own in heritage and wealth.

"Your marriage must now be proclaimed, whether or not it suits Mr. Harold, senior. Servants shall no longer sneer at you. You have friends who will compel some attention to your interests. I only wish Mr. Vernon were here in the city now."

Much more was said. A marvelous clock on the carved mantelpiece struck ten, with a sound almost as soft as that of a summer breeze running through a branch of lilies of the valley.

"I had no idea I had been here almost three hours," exclaimed young Ward, rising quickly. "Good-by, dear Florence, for the present. You shall not be neglected, rest assured of that! And now, to attend to a small matter of interest only to myself. You remember the promise I made you when you gave me the ring? We have met again, and I am no longer under bonds to wear a jewel which has made me a good deal of trouble, for it has kept Violet from promising to some day be my little wife. She was, naturally, jealous of my right to make love to her and yet wear your ring. When I see her again—which I fervently hope will now be soon—I shall show her the absurdity of her doubts. So now, Florrie dear, take back your naughty ring."

As she reached out her hand for it, Charlie took the dimpled member in his own, playfully, and placed the ring on her finger. He had only the most brotherly feeling for the little lady with whom he had jested, and associated since she was a child; and now, it was more out of pity for her, and a kind desire to leave her in lighter spirits than he had found her, that he himself placed the ring on her hand, and smiling, touched his lips lightly to it as he said "good-night, and good-by till we meet again."

Turning to go, he, for the first time, perceived, in the door, a person who had been silently standing there for some three or four minutes; a person he immediately knew to be Fraser Harold, and whom he would have been glad to succeed in meeting, had it not been for an expression on the handsome face which startled and disconcerted him.

The sneer of a Mephistopheles was on the polished, courtly features; but the eyes were red and lurid with jealous rage.

"Really, madam, if I had known how you amused yourself in my absence, I need not have put myself so much out of the way to come up here to prevent your becoming quite desolate. It was at some inconvenience I managed to visit you this evening; but I have been so well entertained during the last five minutes, I will now depart, leaving you to the resources of a new lover. Farewell, Madame Cora Pearl."

"Fraser!" shrieked his wife, darting to him and flinging her arms about his neck. "You shall not speak to me so! You shall not go away! Listen! This is an old friend of mine—let me tell you—but he cast her from him with so much rudeness that she staggered half-across the room."

"I might have known that a girl who would meet me as you did, in Gramercy park, was not a girl to trust," he said, coldly. "I have had enough of you. I have been thinking so for some time; and now I am infinitely obliged to you for giving me a palpable and sufficient reason for putting an end to our acquaintance. You are even more fickle than I deemed you."

He turned to leave the room, but again she rushed and flung herself upon him, dragging him by the night of her passion and anguish rather than by her physical strength, back against his will, while Charles Ward, brave and generous, if young and inexperienced, quickly closed the door and placed his back to it.

"You shall listen to my explanation of what you have seen—for your wife's sake," said Charlie, sternly.

"Do not bore me with explanations; they are my pet aversions," answered Harold, keeping the struggling girl at arm's length and advancing calmly to the door. "Open that, and let me pass, or I shall take great pleasure in blowing out your brains."

"Blow them out, if you will, you infernal sneak and coward!" cried Charlie. "It is with one might expect from a gentleman too mean to protect his own wife from the insults of the servants who wait upon her. To assassinate an unarmed man were not so base as to murder the reputation of a woman!—above all things of the woman you have vowed before Heaven to love and protect."

Gentleman Harold quailed perceptibly under this true charge; the hand which toyed with his revolver did not bring it to view; but he sneered still, as he asked, with forced quietness:

"Who asserts this lady to be my wife? She will have some trouble to prove her claims to the title."

"Fraser! Fraser! Fraser! You pierce my very soul with your cruel words. How can you talk so to your own, own fond little wife! Mr. Rhodes will tell Charlie my words are true—so will the clergyman. I have the certificate. Fraser Harold, I will endure this false position no longer!—to-morrow morning I go to your parents, your sisters, and tell them the truth."

"You will find it difficult to make them believe it," he still sneered. "I came here, tonight, my girl, because I was still very fond of you; and who knows what your power over me might have won me to do? That is all over now. The sight I saw when I came in the door decided my course. Redmond Rhodes sailed for Europe a week ago, to be gone two years; the reverend gentleman you refer to fell dead on the street, to-day, of apoplexy; my family is at our country house; and I am off, to-morrow, with a lot of English swells, for a hunt over the plains—so good-by, forever."

He turned quickly, walked down the room into the adjoining one, out into the hall from thence and down the stairs before Charlie could intercept him.

As she heard the hall door clang, Florence fell headlong to the floor, with the low cry: "Oh, merciful Heaven, DESERTED!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 520.)

The Greeks characterized human follies and absurdities by such phrases as "He plows the air," "he is making clothes for fishes," "he catches the wind with a net," "he roasts snow in a furnace," "he holds a looking-glass to a mole," "he is teaching iron to swim," "he is teaching a pig to play on a flute," "he seeks wool on an ass;" "he washes the Ethiopian."

"ROCK OF AGES."

BY HARVEY HOWARD.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,"
Thoughtlessly the maiden sang;
Fell the words unconsciously
From her girlish, gleeful tongue,
Sung as little children sing,
Sung as sing the birds in June;
Fell the words, like light leaves sown
On the current of the tune—
"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."
Felt her soul no need to hide;
Sweet the song as song could be,
And she had no thought beside;
All the words unheeding
Fell from lips untouched by care,
Dreaming not that each might be
On some other lips a prayer:
"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

"Rock of ages, cleft for me;"
"Twas a woman sang them now,
Pleadingly and prayerfully.
Every word her heart did know.
Rose the song as storm-tossed bird
Beats, with weary wing, the air,
Every note with sorrow stirred,
Every syllable a prayer:
"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."
"Rock of ages, cleft for me;"
Lips grown aged sang the hymn
Trustingly and tenderly.
Voice grown weak and eyes grown dim.
"Let me hide myself in thee."
Trembling though the voice, and low,
Rose the sweet strain peacefully
As a river in its flow:
Sung as only they can sing
Who life's stormy paths have pressed;
Sung as only those can sing
Who behold the promised rest.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me;"
Sung above a coffin's lid,
Underneath, all restfully.
All life's cares and sorrows hid.
Never more, oh, storm-tossed soul
Never more from wind or tide,
Never more from sorrow's roll
Wilt thou need thyself to hide!
Could the slightest, sunken eyes,
Closed beneath the soft gray hair,
Could the mute and stiffened lips
Move again in pleading prayer,
Still—ay, still—their song would be,
"Let me hide myself in thee."

LA MASQUE,

The Vailed Sorceress;

OR,
THE MIDNIGHT QUEEN.

A TALE OF ILLUSION, DELUSION, AND MYSTERY.

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"ERMINIE," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.—CONTINUED.

LEOLINE was rather surprised to find the journey so short, but she arose directly, with silence and dignity—at least with as much of the latter commodity as could be reasonably expected, considering that boats on water are rather unsteady things to be dignified in—and was led gently and with care out of the swaying vessel, and up another flight of stairs. Then, in a few moments, she was conscious of passing from the free night air into the closer atmosphere of a house; and in going through an endless labyrinth of corridors, and passages, and suites of rooms, and flights of stairs, until she became so extremely tired that she stopped with spirited abruptness, and in the plainest possible English gave her conductor to understand that they had gone about far enough for all practical purposes. To which that patient and respectful individual replied that he was glad to inform her they had but a few more steps to go, which the next moment proved to be true, for he stopped and announced that their promenade was over for the night.

"And I suppose I may have the use of my eyes at last?" inquired Leoline, with more haughtiness than Sir Norman could have believed possible so gentle a voice could have expressed.

For reply, her companion rapidly untied the bandage, and withdrew it with a flourish. The dazzling brightness that burst upon her so blinded her that, for a moment, she could distinguish nothing; and when she looked round to contemplate her companion, she found him hurriedly making his exit, and securely locking the door. The sound of the key turning in the lock gave her a most peculiar sensation, which none but those who have experienced it can properly understand. It is not the most comfortable feeling in the world to know you are a prisoner, even if you have no key turned upon you but the weather, and your jailer be a high east wind and lashing rain. Leoline's prison and jailer were something worse; and, for the first time, a cold chill of fear and dismay crept icily to the core of her heart. But Leoline had something of Miranda's courage, as well as her looks and temper; so she tried to feel as brave as possible, and not think of her unpleasant predicament while there remained anything else to think about. Perhaps she might escape, too; and as this notion struck her, she looked with eager anxiety, not unmixed with curiosity, at the place where she was. By this time her eyes had been accustomed to the light, which proceeded from a great antique lamp of bronze, pendant by a brass chain from the ceiling; and she saw she was in a moderately-sized and by no means splendid room. But what struck her most was that everything had a look of age about it, from the glittering oak beams of the floor to the faded, ghostly hangings on the wall. There was a bed at one end—a great, spectral ark of a thing, like a mausoleum, with drapery as old and spectral as that on the walls, and in which she could no more have lain than in a moth-eaten shroud. The seats and the one table the room held were of the same ancient and weird pattern, and gave her a shivering sensation not unlike an ague chill, to look at. There was but one door—a huge structure, with shining panels, securely locked; and escape from that quarter was utterly out of the question. There was one window, hung with dark curtains of tarnished embroidery, but in pushing them aside she met only a dull blank of unlighted glass; for the shutters were firmly secured without. Altogether, she could not form the slightest idea where she was; and, with a feeling of utter despair, she sat down on one of the queer old chairs, with much the same feeling as if she were sitting in a tomb. What would Sir Norman say? What would he ever think of her, when he found her gone! And what was destined to be her fate in this dreadful, out-of-the-way place? She would have cried, as most of her sex would be tempted to do in such a situation, but that her dislike and horror of Count L'Estrange was a good deal stronger than her grief, and turned her tears to sparks of indignant fire. Never, never, never! would she be his wife! He might kill her a thousand times, if he liked, and she wouldn't yield an inch. She did not mind dying in a good cause; she could do it but once. And with Sir Norman she despised her, as she felt he must do, when he found her run away, she rather liked the idea

than otherwise. Mentally, she bade adieu to all her friends before beginning to prepare for her melancholy fate—to her handsome lover, to his gallant friend, Ormiston, to her poor nurse, Prudence, and to her mysterious visitor, La Masque. Ah! that name awoke a new chord of recollection—the casket; she had it with her yet. Instantly everything was forgotten but it and its contents; and she placed a chair directly under the lamp, drew it out, and looked at it. It was a pretty little *bijou* itself, with its polished ivory surface, and shining clasps of silver. But the inside had far more interest for her than the outside, and she fitted the key and unlocked it with a trembling hand. It was lined with azure velvet, wrought with silver thread, in dainty wreaths of water-lilies; and in the bottom, neatly folded, lay a sheet of foolscap. She opened it with nervous haste; it was a common sheet enough, stamped with fool's cap and bells, that showed it belonged to Cromwell's time. It was closely written, in a light, fair hand, and bore the title, "Leoline's History." Leoline's hand trembled so with eagerness, she could scarcely hold the paper; but her eyes rapidly ran from line to line, and she stopped not till she reached the end. While she read, her face alternately flushed and paled, her eyes dilated, her lips parted; and before she finished it, there came over all a look of the most unutterable horror. It dropped from her powerless fingers as she finished; and she sunk back in her chair with such a ghastly paleness that it seemed absolutely like the lividness of death.

A sudden and startling noise awoke her from her trance of horror—some one trying to get in at the window! The chill of terror it sent through every vein acted as a sort of counter-irritant to the other feeling, and she sprang from her chair and turned her face fearfully toward the sounds. But in all her terror she did not forget the mysterious sheet of foolscap, which lay, looking up at her, on the floor; and she snatched it up, and thrust it and the casket out of sight. Still the sounds went on, but softly and cautiously; and at intervals, as if the worker were afraid of being heard, Leoline went back, step by step, to the other extremity of the room, with her eyes still fascinated to the window, and a white terror, that left her perfectly colorless, on her beautiful face. Who could it be? Not Count L'Estrange, for he would surely not need to enter his own house like a burglar—not Sir Norman Kingsley, for he could certainly not find out her abduction and her prison so soon, and she had no other friends in the whole wide world to trouble themselves about her. There was one; but the idea of ever seeing her again was so unspeakably dreadful that she would rather have seen the most horrible specter her imagination could conjure up than that tall, graceful, richly-robed man. Still the noises perseveringly continued; there was the sound of withdrawing bolts, and then a pale ray of moonlight shot between the parted curtains, showing the shutters had been opened. Whiter and whiter Leoline grew, and she felt herself growing cold and rigid with mortal fear. Softly the window was raised, a hand stole in and parted the curtains, and a pale face and two great dark eyes wandered slowly round the room, and rested at last on her, standing like a galvanized corpse, as far from the window as the wall would permit. The hand was lifted in a warning gesture, as if to enforce silence; the window was raised still higher, a figure, lithe and agile as a cat, sprang lightly into the room, and standing with his back to her, reclosed the shutters, reshat the window, and redrew the curtains, before taking the trouble to turn round. This discreet little maneuver, which showed her visitor was human, and gifted with human prudence, reassured Leoline a little, and, to judge by the reverse of the medal, the nocturnal intruder was nothing very formidable after all. But the stranger did not keep her long in suspense, while she stood gazing at him, as if fascinated, he turned round, stepped forward, took off his cap, made her a courtly bow, and then straightening himself up, prepared, with great coolness, to scrutinize and be scrutinized. Well might they look at each other; for the two faces were perfectly the same, and each one saw themselves as others saw them. There was the same coal-black, curling hair; the same lustrous dark eyes; the same clear, colorless complexion, the same delicate, perfect features; nothing was different but the costume and the expression. That latter was essentially different, for the young lady's (*place aux dames*) betrayed amazement, terror, doubt, and delight, all at once; while the young gentleman's was a grand, careless surprise, mixed with just a dash of curiosity. He was the first to speak; and after they had stared at each other for the space of five minutes, he described a graceful sweep with his hand, and held forth in the following strain:

"I greatly fear, fair Leoline, that I have startled you by my sudden and surprising entrance; and if I have been the cause of a moment's alarm to one so perfectly beautiful, I shall hate myself for ever after. If I could have got in any other way, rest assured I would not have risked my neck and your peace of mind by such a suspicious means of ingress as this window; but if you will take the trouble to notice that door is thick, and I am composed of too solid flesh to whisk through the keyhole; so I had to make my appearance the best way I could."

"Who are you?" faintly asked Leoline.

"Your friend, fair lady, and Sir Norman Kingsley's."

Hubert looked to see Leoline start and blush, and was deeply gratified to see her do both; and her whole pretty countenance became alive with new-born hope, as if that name were a magic talisman of freedom and joy.

"What is your name, and who are you?" she inquired, in a breathless sort of way, that made Hubert look at her a moment in calm astonishment.

"I have told you—your friend; christened, as some remote period, Hubert. For further particulars, apply to the Earl of Rochester, whose page I am."

"The Earl of Rochester's page?" she repeated, in the same quick, excited way, that surprised and rather lowered her in that good youth's opinion, for giving way to any feelings so plebeian. "It is—it must be the same!"

"I have no doubt of it," said Hubert. "The same what?"

"Did you not come from France—from Dijon, recently?" went on Leoline, rather inappositely, as it struck her hearer.

"Certainly I came from Dijon. Had I the honor of being known to you there?"

"How strange! How wonderful!" said Leoline, with a paling cheek and quickened breathing. "How mysterious those things turn out! Thank Heaven that I have found some one to love at last!"

This speech, which was Greek, algebra, high Dutch, or thereabouts, to Master Hubert, caused him to stare to such an extent that, had he come to think of it afterward, positively shocked him. The two great, wandering dark eyes transfixed her with so much amazement, brought Leoline to a sense of her talking un-

thomable mysteries, quite incomprehensible to her handsome auditor. She looked at him with a smile, held out her hand; and Hubert received a strange little electric thrill, to see that her eyes were full of tears. He took the hand and raised it to his lips, wondering if the young lady, struck by his good looks, had conceived a rash and inordinate attack of love at first sight, and was about to offer herself to him and discard Sir Norman forever. From these speculations the sweet voice aroused him.

"You have told me who you are. Now, do you know who I am?"

"I hope so, fairest Leoline. I know you are the most beautiful lady in England, and to-morrow will be called Lady Kingsley!"

"I am something more," said Leoline, holding his hand between both hers, and bending near him. "I am your sister!"

The Earl of Rochester's page must have had good blood in his veins; for never was there dudge, grandee, or peer of the realm, more radically and unaffectedly nonchalant than he. To this unexpected announcement he listened with most dignified and well-bred composure, and in his secret heart, or rather vanity, more disappointed than otherwise, to find his first solution of her tenderness a great mistake. Leoline held his hand tight in hers, and looked with loving and tearful eyes in his face.

"Dear Hubert, you are my brother—my long-unknown brother; and I love you with my whole heart!"

"Am I?" said Hubert. "I dare say I am; for they all say we look as much alike as two peas. I am excessively delighted to hear it, and to know that you love me. Permit me to embrace my new relative."

With which the court page kissed Leoline with emphasis, while she scarcely knew whether to laugh, cry, or be provoked at his composure. On the whole, she did a little of all three, and pushed him away with a half pout.

"You insensible mortal! How can you stand there and hear that you have found a sister, with so much indifference?"

"Indifferent? Not I!" said Hubert, in a voice not betokening the slightest emotion.

"How did you find it out, Leoline?"

"Never mind! I shall tell you that again. You don't doubt it, I hope?"

"Of course not. I knew from the first moment I set eyes on you, that if you were not my sister you ought to be! I wish you'd tell me all the particulars, Leoline."

"I shall do so as soon as I am out of this; but how can I tell you anything here?"

"That's true!" said Hubert, reflectively.

"Well, I'll wait. Now, don't you wonder how I found you out, and came here?"

"Indeed I do. How was it, Hubert?"

"Oh, well, I don't know as I can altogether tell you; but you see, Sir Norman Kingsley being possessed of an inspiration that something was happening to you, came to your house a short time ago, and found you, as he suspected, missing. I met him there, rather depressed in his mind about it, and he told me—beginning the conversation, I must say, in a very excited manner," said Hubert, parenthetically, as memory recalled the furious shaking he had undergone—"and he told me he fancied you were abducted, and by one Count L'Estrange. Now, I had a hazy idea who Count L'Estrange was, and where he would be most apt to take you to, and so I came here, and after some searching, more inquiring, and a few unmitigated falsehoods (you'll regret to hear), discovered you were locked up in this place, and succeeded in getting in through the window. Sir Norman is waiting for me, in a state of distraction; so now, having found you, I will go and relieve his mind by reporting accordingly."

"And leave me here?" cried Leoline, in a fright, "and in the power of Count L'Estrange! Oh, no! No! You must take me with you, Hubert!"

"My dear Leoline, it is quite impossible to do it without help, and without a ladder. I will return to Sir Norman; and when the darkness comes that precedes day-dawn, we will raise the ladder to your window, and try to get you out. Be patient—only wait an hour or two, and then you will be free."

"But, oh, Hubert! where am I? What dreadful place is this?"

"Why, I do not know that this is a very dreadful place; and most people consider it a sufficiently respectable house; but still I would rather see my sister anywhere else than in it, and will take the trouble of kidnapping her out of it as quickly as possible."

"But, Hubert, tell me—do tell me, who is Count L'Estrange?" Hubert laughed.

"Cannot, really, Leoline! at least, not until to-morrow, and you are Lady Kingsley."

"But, what if he should come here to-night?"

"I do not think there is much danger of that; but whether he does or not, rest assured you shall be free to-morrow! At all events, it is quite impossible for you to escape with me now; and even as it is, I run the risk of being detected, and made a prisoner of, myself. You must be patient and wait, Leoline, and trust to Providence and your brother Hubert!"

"I must, I suppose?" said Leoline, sighing; "and you cannot take me away until day-dawn?"

"Quite impossible; and then all this drapery of yours will be ever so much in the way. Would you object to garments like these?" pointing to his doublet and hose. "If you would not, I think I could procure you a fit-out."

"But I should, though," said Leoline, with spirit, "and most decidedly, too! I shall wear nothing of the kind, Sir Page!"

"Every one to their fancy," said Hubert, with a French shrug, "and my pretty sister shall have hers, in spite of earth, air, fire, and water! And now, fair Leoline, for a brief time, adieu, and *au revoir*!"

"You will not fail me!" exclaimed Leoline, earnestly, clasping her hands.

"If I do, it shall be the last thing I will fail in on earth; for, if I am alive by to-morrow morning, Leoline shall be free!"

"And you will be careful—you will both be careful!"

"Excessively careful! Now then."

The last two words were addressed to the window, which he noiselessly opened as he spoke. Leoline caught a glimpse of the bright, free moonlight, and watched him with desperate envy; but the next moment the shutters were closed, and Hubert and the moonlight were both gone.

CHAPTER XIX.

HUBERT'S WHISPER.

SIR NORMAN KINGSLEY'S consternation and horror on discovering the dead body of his friend, was only equalled by his amazement as to how he got there, or how he came to be dead at all. The livid face, upturned to the moonlight, was unmistakably the face of a dead man—it was no swoon, no deception, like Leoline's; for the blue, ghastly paleness that marks the flight of the soul from the body was stamped on every rigid feature. Yet, Sir Norman could

not realize it. We all know how hard it is to realize the death of a friend from whom we have but lately parted in full health and life, and Ormiston's death was so sudden. Why, it was not quite two hours since they had parted in Leoline's house, and even the plague could not carry off a victim as quickly as this. "Ormiston! Ormiston!" he called, between grief and dismay, as he raised him in his arms, with his hand over the still heart; but Ormiston answered not, and she heart gave no pulsation beneath his fingers. He tore open his doublet, as the thought of the plague flashed through his mind, but no plague-spot was to be seen, and it was quite evident from the appearance of the face that he had not died of the distemper, neither was there any wound or mark to show that he had met his end violently. Yet the cold, white face was convulsed, as if he had died in throes of agony; the hands were clinched, till the nails sunk into the flesh; and that was the only outward sign or token that he had suffered in expiring. Sir Norman was completely at a loss, and half beside himself, with a thousand conflicting feelings of sorrow, astonishment, and mystification. The rapid and exciting events of the night had turned his head into a mental chaos, as they very well might, but he still had common sense enough left to know that something must be done about this immediately. He knew the best place to take Ormiston was to the nearest apothecary's shop, which establishments were generally open, and filled the whole living night, by the sick and their friends. As he was meditating whether or not to call the surly watchman to help him carry the body, a post-cart came, providentially, along, and the driver—seeing a young man bending over a prostrate form—guessed at once what was the matter, and came to a halt.

"Another one!" he said, coming leisurely up, and glancing at the lifeless form with a cool, professional eye. "Well, I think there is room for another one in the cart; so bear a hand, friend, and let us have him out of this."

"You are mistaken!" said Sir Norman, sharply; "he has not died of the plague. I am not even certain whether he is dead or alive!"

The driver looked at Sir Norman, then stooped down and touched Ormiston's icy face, and listened to hear him breathe. He stood up after a moment, with something like a short laugh.

"If he's alive," he said, turning to go, "then I never saw any one dead! Good-night, sir. I wish you joy when you bring him to."

"Stay!" exclaimed the young man. "I wish you to assist me in bringing him to yonder apothecary's shop, and you may have this for your pains."

"This" proved to be a talisman of alacrity; for the man pocketed it, and briskly laid hold of Ormiston by the feet, while Sir Norman wrapped his cloak reverently about him, and took him by the shoulders. In this style the body was conveyed to the apothecary's shop, which they found half full of applicants for medicine, among whom their entrance with the corpse produced no greater sensation than a momentary stare. The attire and bearing of Sir Norman proving him to be something different from their usual class of visitors, brought one of the drowsy apprentices immediately to his side, inquiring what were his orders.

"A private room, and your master's attendance directly," was the authoritative reply.

Both were to be had; the former, a hole in the wall behind the shop; the latter, a pallid, cadaverous-looking person, with the air of one who had been dead a week, thought better of it, and rose again. There was a long table in the aforesaid hole in the wall, bearing a strong family likeness to a dissecting-table; upon this the stark figure was laid, and the postcard driver disappeared. The apothecary held a light close to the face; applied his ear to the mouth and heart; held a pocket-mirror over his lips, looked at it, shook his head; and set down the candle with decision.

"The man is dead, sir," was his criticism, "dead as a door nail! All the medicine in my shop wouldn't kindle one spark of life in these ashes!"

"At least, try! Try something—bleeding, for instance," suggested Sir Norman.

Again the apothecary examined the body, and again he shook his head dolefully.

"It's no use, sir; but, if it will please you, I can try."

The right arm was bared, the lancet inserted; one or two black drops sluggishly followed, and nothing more.

"It's all a waste of time, you see," remarked the apothecary, wiping his dreadful little weapon, "he's as dead as ever I saw anybody in my life! How did he come to his end, sir—not of the plague?"

"I don't know," said Sir Norman, gloomily. "I wish you would tell me that."

"Can't do it, sir; my skill doesn't extend that far. There is no plague-spot or visible wound or bruise on the person; so he must have died of some internal complaint—probably disease of the heart."

"Never knew him to have such a thing," said Sir Norman, sighing. "It is very mysterious and very dreadful, and notwithstanding all you have said, I cannot make him dead. Can he not remain here until morning, at least?"

The starved apothecary looked at him out of a pair of hollow, melancholy eyes.

"Gold can do anything," was his plaintive reply.

"I understand. You shall have it. Are you sure you can do nothing more for him?"

"Nothing whatever, sir; and excuse me, but there are customers in the shop, and I must leave, sir."

Which he did, accordingly; and Sir Norman was left alone with all that remained of him who, two hours before, was his warm friend. He could scarcely believe that it was the calm majesty of death that so changed the expression of that white face; and yet, the longer he looked, the more deeply an inward conviction assured him that it was so. He chafed the chilling hands and face, he applied harts horn and burnt feathers to the nostrils; but all these appliances, though excellent in their way, could not exactly raise the dead to life, and in this case, proved a signal failure. He gave up his doleful, as last, in despair, and folding his arms, looked down at what lay on the table, and tried to convince himself that it was Ormiston. So absorbed was he in the endeavor, that he heeded not the passing moments, until it struck him with a shock that Hubert might even now be waiting for him at the trying place, with news of Leoline. Love is stronger than friendship, stronger than grief, stronger than death, stronger than every other feeling in the world; so he suddenly seized his hat, turned his back on Ormiston and the apothecary's shop, and strode off to the place he had quitted. No Hubert was there; but two figures were passing slowly along in the moonlight, and one of them he recognized, with an impulse to spring at him like a tiger and strangle him. But he had been so shocked and subdued by his recent discovery, that the impulse which, half an hour before, would have been unhesitatingly obeyed, went for nothing,

now; and there was more of reproach, even than anger in his voice, as he went over and laid his hand on the shoulder of one of them.

"Stay!" he said. "One word with you, Count L'Estrange. What have you done with Leoline?"

"Ah! Sir Norman, as I live!" cried the count, wheeling round and lifting his hat. "Give you good-even—rather, good-morning, Kingsley—for St. Paul's has long gone the mid-night hour."

Sir Norman, with his hand still on his shoulder, returned not the courtesy, and regarded the gallant count with a stern eye.

"Where is Leoline?" he frigidly repeated.

"Really," said the count, with some embarrassment, "you attack me so unexpectedly, and so like a ghost or a highwayman—by the way, I have a word to say to you about highwaymen, and was seeking you to say it."

"Where is Leoline?" shouted the exasperated young knight, releasing his shoulder, and clutching him by the throat. Tell me, or by Heaven! I'll pitch your neck and heels into the Thames!"

Instantly the sword of the count's companion flashed in the moonlight, and in two seconds more, its blue blade would have ended the mortal career of Sir Norman Kingsley, had not the count quickly sprung back, and made a motion for his friend to hold.

"Wait!" he cried, commanding, with an arm outstretched to each. "Keep off! George, sheathe your sword and stand aside. Sir Norman Kingsley, one word with you, and be it in peace."

"There can be no peace between us," retorted that aggravated young gentleman fiercely, "until you tell me what has become of Leoline."

"All in good time. We have a listener; and does it not strike you our conference should be private?"

"Public or private, it matters not a jot, so that you tell me what you've done with Leoline," replied Sir Norman, with whom, it was evident, getting beyond his question was a moral and physical impossibility. "And if you do not give an account of yourself, I'll run you through, as sure as your name is Count L'Estrange!"

A strange sort of smile came over the face of the count, at this direful threat, as if he fancied, in that case, he was safe enough; but Sir Norman, luckily, did not see it, and heard only the suave reply:

"Certainly, Sir Norman; I shall be delighted to do so. Let us stand over there in the shadow of that arch; and, George, do you remain here within call."

The count blandly waved Sir Norman to follow, which Sir Norman did, with much the air of a sulky lion; and a moment after, both stood facing each other within the archway.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 327.)

CUSTER

BY EDMUND C. STEEDMAN.

What! shall that sudden blade
Leap out no more?
No more thy hand be laid
Upon the sword-hilt, smiting sore!
Oh, for another such
The charger's reins to clutch—
One equal voice to summon victory,
Sounding thy battle-cry.
Brave darling of the soldiers' choicest
Would there were one more voice!

Oh, gallant charge, too bold!
Oh, fierce, imperious greed
To pierce the clouds that in their darkness hold
Slaughter of man and steed!
Now, stark and cold,
Among thy fallen braves thou liest
And even with thy blood defiest
The wolfish foe!

But ah, thou liest low,
And all our birthday song is hushed in death!

Young lion of the plain,
Thou of the tweny manes!
Holly the soldiers' hearts shall beat,
Thy mouth's thy death repeat,
Thy vengeance seek the trail again
Where thy red doomsday lie,
But on the charge no more shall stream
Thy hair—no more thy sabre gleam—
No more ring out thy battle-shout,
Thy cry of victory!

Not when a hero falls
The sound a world appals;
For while we plant his cross,
There is a glory, even in the loss;
But when some craven heart
From honor darts to part,
Then, then the groan, the blanching cheek,
And men in whispers speak,
Nor kith nor country dare reclaim
From the black depths his name.

Thou wild young warrior, rest,
By all the prairie winds caressed!
Swift was thy dying pang,
Even as the war-cry rang.
Thy deathless spirit mounted high
And sought Columbia's sky;
There, to the northward far,
Shines a new star,
And from it blazes down
The light of thy renown!

JULY 10, 1876.

OLD DAN RACKBACK, The Great Extarminator: OR, THE TRIANGLE'S LAST TRAIL!

BY OLL COOMES,
AUTHOR OF "HAPPY HARRY," "IDAHO TOM,"
"DAKOTA DAN," "OLD HURRICANE,"
"HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.
THE WRONGED WIFE.

The day was near its close. Only the distant mountain peaks reflected the blaze of the setting sun, while low in the valleys the shadows lurked like assassins, and the dismal voices of night were heard issuing, as it were, from out the realms of Nowhere.

Down from among the shadows of the Western hills, into the valley of the Powder river, a horse and rider came plodding along. The horse was a sorry-looking old creature, and the rider was a woman—a fit companion for the animal she rode.

She was a white woman, tall and angular, with sharp, black eyes and thin, shrewish face. Her hair was of fiery red color and being parted in the middle, was combed close upon the forehead. She wore a dress of faded blue linsey-woolsey that fit her form rather slovenly.

A sort of pea-jacket and a sun-bonnet, minus the pasteboards, completed the dress of this singular looking female.

Her horse was loaded with as many bundles and packs as a Saratoga belle, and she rode along as quietly smoking a clay pipe, grim with the blackness of age, as though she were not hundreds of miles from civilization and in the midst of untold danger.

When about a mile from the river, she drew rein and dismounted; unpacked her animal and turned it loose with as much ease and business tact as though she had been accustomed to the lonely life of the border, and felt no uneasiness nor fear of the surrounding solitude.

From her movements it was plain enough that she was going into camp. From a bundle

she produced a hatchet and trimmed the limbs from the body of a straight sapling which she then used as the central pole for a tent. She took a large canvas and tied it around the slender bush some six feet from the ground; then she drew it out at the bottom in the shape of a cone, fastening the edges down by means of hard wooden pins previously provided for that purpose; and, her lodge was completed.

She now moved her effects into the structure, and from a bundle took a ball of twine, one end of which she attached to a sapling about three feet from the ground. Then she walked backward in a circle around the tent, and about twenty feet from it, paying out the ball as she went and now and then twining it once around a bush or twig. She went on around until she reached the place of starting when she fastened the string to the first bush again, thus completely encircling the tent. She next carried the remainder of the string to the apex of the tent and run it down inside. Three other strings were then attached to the encircling cord, and carried to the top of the tent and run through to the inside, as the first. Then, gathering these four pendant ends together, she attached them to a small silver bell of a clear sharp tone.

A look of satisfaction now flitted over her face—evidence that all arrangements for the night had been completed; and so she sat down, and from a carpet-bag took some provisions and a flask of wine, and then partook of a hearty supper.

By the time her repast had been completed it was quite dark, and so she lit a tiny dark lantern and examined a brace of fine-looking revolvers; and then with lantern closed, and revolvers at her side, she finally laid down to rest. Hours wore away, and the night advanced. All was silent as the grave around this strange, fearless woman's lonely tent. Even her horse, that stood near, seemed imbued with the spirit of silence, for he stood as still as a rock.

Suddenly, however, as the night wore on, the tinkle of the bell suspended overhead in the tent, rung out a warning note. In an instant the woman was upon her feet, with lantern and revolvers in hand. She peered out; all was dark as pitch, but she could hear the approach of footsteps. Some one was near—had run against the encircling cord and caused the bell to be rung. There was no denying the warning of approaching danger—the device of warning was as unerring as it was cunning.

The intruder came near the tent—the woman stepped out, flashed open the lantern into his face and leveled a revolver full upon his breast.

"Stand, midnight prowler! stand or die!" "Great mortality! a female woman's voice, as 'm born!" replied the man, at whose heels growled a ferocious dog.

"Yes, I be a woman, skulking wretch—disturber of sweet repose; and I s'posed the virgin solitude of this place unconquered by the presence of treacherous man."

"Bless my soul, ma'am, you 'pear to be down on the men folk," replied the man, who was none other than Dakota Dan, the ranger.

"Down on them!" she replied, contemptuously. "I hate the very earth they walk on, the miserable trash."

"I've an idee," said Dan, "that you've been jilted, ole gal."

"Don't insult me, debonair wretch, or I'll plug you through. I can shoot, and, lone, unprotected female that I be, I'll show you that I can resent an insult."

"Beg pardon, ma'am," said Dan, graciously. "But it would afford me sublime pleasure to know who you be."

"Man's inquisitiveness!" sneered the woman. "I'd die dead in my tracks afore I'd tell you my name. Please gracious, I have a mind and will of my own, and whenever you catch Sabina Bandy—there! confounded old fool that I be, I've let it out."

"Sabina Bandy!" exclaimed Dan, in astonishment; "great Judea! I wish I had a dollar for every time I've heard that name."

"You heard my name? Who be you, old tramp?"

"Dakota Dan."

"And you've heard my name, oh! Well, please gracious, I think I'm on a trail again."

"Yes; I've heard Kit Bandy speak of you a million times, or more," said Dan, "with tears in his eyes."

"Blessed stars!" exclaimed the woman. "I think my journey is nigh an end. I'm after that man, Kit Bandy, owdacious, low-lived wreck of female happiness. He's my husband, Mr. Dakota Dan; he won my heart in his childish innocence, wed me, and then, great Judea! he deserted me—left me weeping, sad and lonely, with a crushed and bleeding heart. But, please gracious, I rallied from my brokenheartedness and determined to find that old heathen if I had to ransack creation over and under. I struck the destroyer of female happiness's trail a month ago among the hills, and now, Mr. Dan, if you know anything 'bout him, just let it out, and receive the blessings of a wronged and innocent woman."

"Your husband is not over a mile from here."

"Hallelujah!" exclaimed the woman in an ecstasy of joy, "if you wer'n't a man, I'd embrace you with woman's tenderness for this news. Joyful tidings! I just want to get my eyes on that ongrateful man—my fingers in his hair, and then I'll be content to die."

"Ole woman, seems to me I've heard your voice before," said Dan.

"No doubt, you've heard the echoes of a broken heart like mine; but, sir, if you will lead me to that ongrateful man, I'll speak a good word for you in Heaven when the angels come for me."

"You mean it, fair lady; but I doubt your ever don'tin' angel's wings; howsoever, your husband is a captive in the power of a gang of robbers."

"Merciful man!" she exclaimed, somewhat surprised and disappointed by the news; but gradually recovering her composure, continued: "but then it don't make any difference; I'll wade through blood and fire to get at that man. Dakota Dan, will you do a noble, yet deserted woman, a favor? lead me to the presence of him who promised, at the altar, to love, cherish and protect me from harm and the adversity of the world?"

"I will," answered Dan, his face aglow with pleasure. "I'll do it," he continued to himself, "just for the furious fun of the thing. Heavens! won't that be a report when they come together?"

The woman went into the tent and in a moment returned and announced her readiness to start for the robber-camp.

CHAPTER XXXIX.
A CONJUGAL WELCOME.

ALL was comparatively quiet in the robber-camp in which Kit Bandy had been seen by Dakota Dan. Old Kit, himself, seemed an objective point against which harsh anathemas and curses were hurled; for there was one thing

connected with his presence in the outlaw camp that Dan had overlooked: Kit was a prisoner—his feet and legs being securely bound. The fact, however, of his hands being free is what led to this oversight. Moreover, old Kit seemed to be enjoying his usual exuberance of spirit, and perfect freedom of his tongue which Dan did not suppose would be tolerated from any but a friend.

Kit had not been wounded at the time he and Dan became separated, but he had affected a *malin* in order to get into the camp of his former friends. His object in this was the release of Idaho Tom, and all worked well until the outlaws got him to the light, when they discovered that he was not injured at all; and, mistrusting his purpose, they made him prisoner before he could escape.

Kit tried to argue them out of their suspicions, and to restore himself to his former place in their confidence. But, he could no longer work upon their credulity; and every assertion was rebuked with an oath or a contradiction.

"Gentlemen, partners of many a day," he finally said, "if I can not convince you of my good faith, time will. There's a day for reckoning, and then you'll see, boys, how the land lays with me. I've been a martyr all my days to the injustice of humanity. When I lived with old Sabina, my wife, she led me an awful life, and if I hadn't got away—when I did, my mind'd been fogged long before—"

"You got away, but, please heavens, you'll not do it again!" screamed a voice, in which all the pent-up fury of a wild, maddened tigress burst forth like a Vesuvius, and a form sprung out of the darkness, shot across the area between the woods and fire and came down upon Kit Bandy like a hawk upon a bird.

It was the woman—Sabina Bandy.

"Oh, great horn of Joshua! save me! save me, boys!" cried Kit, "tis her—she—Sabina—the demoness!"

"Stars alive, you old essence of cussedness!" the ogress fairly hissed. "I'll tear you bald, you doosin', ongrateful hound," and she buried her claws in his hair, and fairly danced as she pulled and tugged at the helpless prisoner's scraggy locks.

The outlaws rushed forward to interfere, but, seeing how the matter stood, they fell back and became delighted witnesses of this conjugal reunion.

Kit hollowed and begged manfully; Sabina fairly cried with rage, the spirit of vengeance; the outlaws roared with laughter and the woods resounded with all.

And from his concealment in the woods, Dakota Dan also witnessed the whole, his sides shaking and the tears running down his face, so overpowered was he with suppressed laughter and merriment.

The old tennant finally became tired of her violent demonstrations, and stopped for breath.

She glanced slowly and cautiously around her like a tigress looking for a new victim. Her eyes snapped, her face was flushed, and her breast came quick and short.

"Gentlemen," she finally said, addressing the outlaws, "you may laugh and laugh till purgatory freezes over for all I, Sabina Bandy, cares. That man there is my lawful, wedded husband—the miserable wretch who once knelt at my feet and swore by all that was sacred that he loved me. I, a young and thoughtless girl, believed him. He won my heart and hand and then—oh, then! he deserted me. But, please gracious, I have him now, and I'm bound to have my satisfaction. I'll mail the infernal meanness out of him. Behold me, gentlemen," she said, striking a tragic air, "the wreck of former beauty—boo-hoo! it's too much to think about! Give me a blanket and I'll smother the destroyer of maiden beauty and innocence to death!"

She sprang toward an Indian warrior, and with one sweep, tore the heavy woollen blanket from his shoulders; and catching it with extended hands, rushed toward Kit with it outspread as if to cover him. But she stopped short as she passed the fire, and with a sudden movement, spread the blanket over the fire, wrapping all in perfect gloom.

For a moment all stood mute with astonishment; the smell of the greasy blanket spread on the air, and a silence like death reigned. Then Prairie Paul sprang forward, and seizing the blanket by a corner, jerked it off the fire. The light flared out. A cry burst from the lips of the outlaws—a fierce, savage yell of baffled triumph chilled through the night.

Kit Bandy and his amiable spouse had vanished from view—had escaped into the woods during the momentary darkness that hung over the camp!

CHAPTER XL.
THE CASE OF AN INFANT.

DAKOTA DAN had been an eye-witness to the whole scene of infelicity that had resulted in the deliverance of Kit Bandy from the power of the outlaws, and none were more surprised over the result of the meeting of the husband and wife than was the old borderman himself.

When the amiable Sabina left Dan near the outlaw camp, she made a request of him that he should await the result of her interview with Kit. Why it was that she should make this request, he could not comprehend, but no sooner did he see that they had escaped than something of the truth flashed across his mind; and before he had much time for conjecture, the sound of approaching feet drew his attention aside.

"Dan! Dan!" a hurried voice suddenly called out near him.

"What?" answered Dan.

"Get out of this, ole man, if you don't want to get nabbed. Come along with us. I've got the old runaway scratch, and I'll die afore I take my hands off him, true as my name's Sabina Bandy."

Dan now recognized the voice as that of Sabina, and at once started away after them.

They moved rapidly, and yet silently. Not a word was spoken by either of the party until the tent was reached; then Sabina turned to Dan, and said:

"Old gent, this 'ere kentry is very unhealthy for one of your corporeity, and I reckon you'd better trot on to the island, and I'll bundle up and take the ole man and rack out for home."

"Bandy," said Dan, sympathetically, "can't you prevail on your gallant half to go down to the island just above the ford and spend the night with us?"

"Dan-yil," said Kit, humbly, "you war never married, I believe you said, therefore you know nothin' of this—"

"Shet your drotted ole mouth, or I'll baste my hand over it," interrupted Sabina. "You want to get the robbers down here by your loud, fierce talkin'. Ole man, maybe I'll take a notion to come down to the island and spend the night with this ole vagrant, so you can go on and say no more to him."

Dan turned and left the twain alone in the depth of the woods. He made his way directly toward the island, and as he reached the river-bank just opposite his friends' retreat, the sound of voices in conversation arrested his attention. He stopped and listened. He recognized one

of the voices as that of Captain Sebley, whom, he learned from his conversation, was about embarking for the island.

The old ranger knew at once that the man was about to spring the trap that he believed he had successfully arranged for the capture of Idaho Tom's followers; and he resolved not only to assist in thwarting the villain's plans, but to spring a trap upon him, that might ultimately lead to the restoration of Idaho Tom to his friends. With this object in view, he hurried to where he had left his dug-out, and at once embarked for the island. He landed on the lower side, and of the guard who met him, he learned that Captain Sebley had not yet arrived upon the island.

Hurrying on to the cabin, Dan hastily informed his friends of the adventures of the night—of the rescue of Kit Bandy by his wife, and of the proposed visit of Captain Sebley. Then he made a suggestion regarding the captain's visit that at once met the favor of the rangers, and gave them hopes of effecting Tom's rescue.

A moment later, the captain landed on the island, and was conducted to the cabin by the sentinel who met him.

The boys and old Dan greeted his return as though they were in no manner aware of his true character.

"Well, boys," the villain said, "I have had an interview with the Indians, and they have promised you, through me, a safe conduct from their territory."

"That's generous in them," said old Dan, edging around until he had placed himself between the man and the door; "and how soon did you tell 'em we'd git outen here?"

"Right away," answered Sebley, stroking his long beard.

There was a momentary silence, then Dan spoke.

"Captain, it 'pears to me that we've met afore. Didn't I meet you and a passel of fellers on the plain a few days ago?"

"I think not," said the captain, not the least disconcerted.

"Well, now look here, captain, this is dogged thing. I know you jist as well as a book. You needn't think we're asleep, and are goin' to be caught by a robber-chief and scallawag in gine ral. No, sir—see!"

Sebley started violently. An oath burst from his lips, and with a bound he reached the door. But the rangers were on the alert, and before he could escape he was seized and overpowered. Then old Dan tore aside the disguise and revealed the features of Prairie Paul, the robber-chief.

"You owdashus ole skinkint!" exclaimed the ranger, "you took us for a pack of fools, did ye? thought we war asleep, did ye? didn't know the Triangle war here, did ye?"

Prairie Paul was inclined to make the best of his situation, and take the whole in a very easy and jovial spirit. He interchanged words and jokes with the boys over his almost successful adventure in the garb of Captain Sebley, and indulged in outbursts of laughter when Dan narrated the adventures of Sabina Bandy in the robber-camp.

Altogether, Prairie Paul was not a man for whom one would experience a natural aversion, for there was something of the gentleman, as well as the robber and outlaw, about him.

"Well, boys, how's this matter to end?" he finally questioned.

"In death," replied Dan, "unless you have our friend, Idaho Tom, restored to us, and that before long."

"But, suppose this was beyond human power?" said Prairie Paul.

"Then it shall be eye for eye, and tooth for tooth," answered Dan, with a desperate firmness in his tone.

"You're a bitter pill, Dakota Dan," said the prisoner.

Before Dan could answer, a figure darkened the doorway. It was the form of the stranger, Ichabod Flea.

"Hallo, Mr. Flea," exclaimed Dan, "you're back, are ye?"

"Don't you see I be?" was the laconic answer; "but I see that you have got a prisoner. Well, well; verily the mills of the gods grind slowly, and so forth. Now that man is the redoubtable Prairie Paul—alias Whitelaw Maffitt, who's wanted in more than one court of justice."

Prairie Paul started violently, and he searched the face of Ichabod Flea with a look of uneasiness. He seemed to take relief from the fact of his not recognizing the man.

"Great horn that blew down old Jericho!" suddenly broke upon the ears of the party, and the distressed, comical-looking face of Kit Bandy was thrust in at the door.

Dakota Dan burst into a peal of laughter.

"She brought you down, did she, Bourbon?" he asked.

"Brought nothin'," was Kit's reply; "but, see here, Danyil, if you'll jist keep still 'bout that matter I'll be much obliged to you."

"I'll do it, Kit, if you'll jist tell me whar she be."

"In purgatory, I reckon," answered Kit. Dan again went off into a fit of rollicking laughter.

"Horn of Joshua!" exclaimed Kit, when his eyes fell upon Prairie Paul, "have they got you salted, Captain Paul?"

Prairie Paul answered with a furious oath, for upon Kit Bandy he now placed all blame of his defeat and capture. He accused him of treachery, and even went so far as to threaten him.

"Mr. Maffitt," said Kit, "you need not waste words of threat on me. You are now the prisoner of myself and Ichabod Flea. We, sir, are government detectives, and for years have been hunting up and delivering to justice just such overland robbers as you and others have been. If I did volunteer in your service, you cannot attach crime to my name. I did it in furtherance of my work as a detective, and what I have learned of robber-life will enable me to purge the hill of every band."

"Curse your old skin, you are not out of this," replied Prairie Paul, fiercely.

"Oh, well, we'll not quarrel about that, Maffitt. I never quarrel with my prisoners," answered Kit.

"Remember, gentlemen," said Paul, his face aglow with inward triumph, "that one of your men is alone in my power."

"You allude to Idaho Tom?" said Darcy Cooper.

"I do," replied the villain, a satanic smile upon his face.

"Well, see 'bout that, captain," answered Kit. "It strikes me that I've struck a trail that leads among the hills; and jist as soon as Dakota Dan-yil and Ichabod Flea are ready to sally forth with me, we'll go to 'dahio Thomas' rescue."

"Great Judea! I'm ready this minnit," replied Dan.

"And here, too," added Ichabod.

"Then let us embark at once, for this is the time for us to work," said Kit Bandy.

Preparations for departure were therefore made. The rangers were given charge of the island and prisoner, and cautioned against the

tricks and stratagems of the enemy on either shore of the river.

The trio embarked in Prairie Paul's canoe, and dropped silently down the river at the will of the current. Not one of them spoke a word. Kit sat at the stern and guided the boat. A dense fog hung over the stream. The darkness was impenetrable to human eye. There was no wind, and the swash of the river was the only sound that greeted their ears.

The minds of the trio were busy during their silent descent of the river, and none more so than that of Dakota Dan. He was thinking of Kit Bandy, the man before him—of his interview with General Custer, his captivity and his release by his wife, Sabina. Then arose the question: "How had Kit escaped from his wife? Where was she? Had he murdered her?" The thought sent a shudder through his whole frame, and he was on the eve of expressing his feelings.

The dip of oars coming up the river suddenly arrested the attention of all. They listened intently. A boat was ascending the stream; it would pass within a few paces of them.

Clutching their weapons, the three awaited the approach of the canoe.

Just as it came alongside, the paddles ceased their movement. The occupants had discovered the approach of the other canoe, and one of them put out a hand. It came in contact with Dakota Dan's face, but was quickly withdrawn.

"Who be you?" demanded Dan, involuntarily.

"Ugh! pale-face friend," was the response. "You're a cussed red skin," answered Dan, and his words were accompanied with the click of a revolver.

"Don't shoot! don't shoot! kill baby!" exclaimed the Indian, in a pleading, whimpering tone.

"Kill what?" sternly questioned Dan.

As if in answer to his interrogative, the tiny wall of an infant broke upon their ears.

CHAPTER XLII.
A BABY IN CAMP.

THE three men were completely astonished by the sound that broke upon their ears. It was no deception, they knew, but the unmistakable cry of a young infant, half-smothered in a bundle of wraps. For a moment they sat almost speechless, Kit being the first to break the silence.

"What's your name, red-skin?" he asked.

"Qadooc," answered the Indian, timidly.

"Ah! a French half-breed," added Kit; "but what's that you've got there?"

"Squaw, and two papooses."

"Indeed! well, where you going?"

"Up river."

"So I perceive; but to what point?"

"The island—spend night there—then go on way off."

"Preczactly," said Kit, "but I believe you ort to have an escort from here, and so one of us'd better see that you reach the island."

After some conversation, Dakota Dan concluded to accompany the half-breed and his family to the island, and rising to his feet, stepped into their canoe, and the next moment both boats were in motion—Kit and Ichabod continuing on down the stream, while Dan and the half-breed pushed slowly toward the island.

The Indian became somewhat sullen, and betrayed some disdain at the mistrust of the whites. The woman remained perfectly quiet aside from a low, whispered lullaby to one of the babes that was uneasy and restless.

They finally reached the island and landed. Qadooc was considerably surprised to find the place already occupied; but without the least hesitation they followed Dan to the cabin, the man carrying his rifle and a number of packs and blankets, and the woman the two children—one tied up in a shawl and strapped to her back in the true Indian style, while the other she carried in a long willow basket.

The rangers were not a little surprised at the presence of the family there at that time of night, and for a moment the greatest curiosity was manifested. Dan, however, set all at ease by explaining the circumstances under which they met, and how they came to be there.

Qadooc was a young man—possibly not over twenty-five, and though he maintained a morose silence, there was nothing at all repulsive about his features. His wife was several years his junior, and almost white. She was rather pretty, with dark hair and eyes, and a shy, timid look.

There was nothing mean about either of their garbs, and altogether they were rather a respectable-looking couple of French half-breeds.

The woman deposited the baby in the basket in one corner, then removed the other from her back and hung it in a kind of a hammock against the

OLD MRS. GRIMES.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

Old Mrs. Grimes is dead again;
Give her a long adieu,
She always wore a kindly smile
And spectacles of blue.

The king of fate upon her lip
Bestowed his solemn touch;
Her resignation was most sweet
And her extraction, Dutch.

Always contented with her sphere,
Though very lowly born,
Her feet e'er walked in cheerfulness
And stockings made of yarn.

She had a kindly word for all,
And to her life's last brink
Religion was her daily food
And tea quite strong her drink.

Among the poor she often went,
And weekly made her rounds;
You saw at once her heart was light,
Her weight three hundred pounds.

The neighbors' scandals she despised,
She thought it evil work,
And from all them she'd turn her ear,
Her trumpet she would cork.

She had a very gentle soul
Through all her earthly scenes;
She hated hypocrites and shams,
But dearly cherished greens.

She kept at peace with all the town,
Looked over others' faults,
She carried peace where'er she went
And also smelling-salts.

That there was something good in all
She never had a doubt;
She had a touch of humor, too,
And rheumatism and gout.

She strove into the minds of all
Good precepts to instill,
Peace reposed on her aged head
And an old cap and veil.

At last she followed Mr. Grimes,
We ne'er shall see her more;
Before she took a long farewell
She sold her notion store.

St. Denis Place.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THEY made a strikingly contrasting picture, standing in the warm June twilight; and the fragrant odors of the tea-roses and the woodbine, and the budding grapevines, lingered around them as if the tender scents were fitting tributes to them.

Two fair young girls, the same age to an hour, and as unlike as sisters could possibly be; and each a perfect type of her own style of loveliness—both of them peeresses in their royal dower of beauty.

Jessamine stood leaning against the railing of the veranda, her white hands caressing the spicy yellow honeysuckle, and her haughty eyes, that could melt from the cool, brilliant gray they looked now into such liquid darkness, when occasion required—her splendid, calmly-cold eyes were roaming away out into the gathering dusk that was falling like a purple veil of tissue over wood and lawn. A grand-looking girl, who looked every inch a princess, for all her dress was a simple serge, and her ornaments only a cluster of shining green leaves she had carelessly fastened in her purple-black hair—thick, magnificent hair, that was braided on her head and made you think of a coronet.

She turned her face toward the steps of the veranda—her eyes suddenly recalled in their wandering, listless glances, and showing a half-veiled, half-amused expression.

"Dell, how much longer are we going to stay here—at least, how much longer do you want to stay? I am sure I shall die of ennui if it lasts much longer."

A dainty little creature, with tresses of sun-gold hair streaming down to her waist, raised a pair of violet eyes.

"Oh, don't think of going back to the city yet, Jessamine! I wish we might never have to go."

Jessamine's white eyelids quivered, and she bent her stately head nearer the lily face upturned to hers.

"Never go back! Why, Dell! Is it possible you are so infatuated with the country as to actually wish that? Child—for three months it is all very well to bury one's self as we are buried, and I've no doubt but that mamma will feel much better and stronger for it; but to stay longer—in a hired cottage, with only one half-grown girl to assist in the work, and no amusements of any sort, and our joint stock of earnings exhausting itself daily—I tell you, Dell, I prefer our own suite of rooms at home, and my music scholars and your book-keeping—with a chance of occasional enjoyment."

Jessamine's low, languid voice was just a little bitter as it fell on Dell's ears.

"I dare say you're right, dear. I ought not to enjoy idleness so thoroughly—only I feel as if I deserved it, and when we go back it will be to a long winter of constant work. But I do love the country, Jessie."

Jessamine smiled, and laid a spray of woodbine against her cool, fair cheek.

"So would I—if, for instance, I lived in the mansion over yonder, the St. Denis place, you know, where the stately housekeeper showed us through, and decanted on the wonderful qualities and embarrassing wealth of the absent owner. If I owned such a place, Dell, and had a corps of twenty servants as Mr. St. Denis keeps, even in his absence—oh, I forgot to tell you, Dell, it is true there will be a grand reception given a week after he gets back, and he is expected hourly."

There was a gleam of enthusiasm in her gray eyes now, that made her look softer and prettier, but that, somehow, also made you think there was hotly burning ambitious schemes hidden under the japonica beauty, and cold, calculating shrewdness beneath the tranquil, languid tones. And then you did not think Jessamine Warner so regally splendid as before.

Dell lifted her eyebrows in a graceful little gesture of surprise.

"A reception? Oh, Jessie, and of course there'll be a dance—can't you imagine a waltz in that magnificent long saloon? Oh, dear, how I'd like to go!"

Jessamine's lip-curved.

"Of course I'd like to go, but do you think for a moment the aristocratic families around here would condescend to associate with us?"

Dell's face grew a little stern.

"Why not? We are ladies, born and bred, if we do work for our living."

Jessamine laughed contemptuously.

"You foolish child! I can tell you our faces and handsome dresses—if we had them—would take us where our family name would not. And I can tell you something else, Dell—"

The little gate at the roadside opened at that instant, and the sound of lagging footsteps coming toward the house interrupted Jessamine's remark; and then a dusty, travel-stained man paused at the foot of the steps, and touched his shabby hat-rim to the girls.

He was not a terrifying spectacle by any means, but evidently one of the many respectable, discouraged, disheartened men one so often sees, nowadays, tramping through the

country in search of work—at least, if one judged by his clothes, which were dusty and plain, or by his face, that was pale and tired.

Jessamine drew herself up.

"Go away. We have nothing for you. We don't encourage tramps here."

He touched his hat—the rim was decidedly battered and dusty.

"I beg pardon, ladies, but if you will give me a—"

Jessamine swept across the veranda angrily.

"Will you march off, or shall I have the dog set on you? Dell, go tell Ann to unfasten Ponto." The man turned away, slowly, as if to move was an effort, and Dell sprang up in an impulse of remonstrative protest.

"Jessie, how can you be so heartless! He is as pale as death, and only see how he drags himself along! You might have let him sit down a minute, and at least have given him a kind word, and a piece of bread and butter."

A contemptuous laugh peeled from Jessamine's red lips.

"Tired and ill—drunk and a thief, you'd better say! A piece of bread and butter! Oh, Dell!"

Dell raised her finger warningly.

"Oh, Jessie—don't. He'll hear you."

Jessamine raised her voice a key higher.

"Let him hear, then! Perhaps you had better sit and watch that dog not faint and fall." She swept haughtily into the house, leaving Dell with her cheeks flushing, and a compassion born of the sweet womanly sympathy, glowing in her blue eyes as she watched the man walk slowly, painfully along, and finally halt at the gate, as if in utter discouragement at the long stretch of road between him and the next house where he might find what Jessamine had rudely denied—the magnificent country seat of Hugh St. Denis, from whose doors no beggar was ever turned away hungry.

Dell saw, and her quick instincts told her what she imagined his manner meant. Quick as a bird, she dashed up-stairs to her room, and snatched her portmanteau from the bureau drawer, and was down again with a greenback crushed in her hand, as she ran softly after him, still leaning against the gate-post, still looking with that same strange expression on his pale face, at the towers of St. Denis place.

"Here—please—it isn't much—but it's all I have to spare. Take it, please!"

Her sweet, eager voice startled him, and he turned suddenly to see Dell's beautiful flushed face and tender, thoughtful eyes—dewy, and clear as crystals—her dainty little hand held out to him, with a five dollar bill fluttering in the fingers.

He looked surprisedly at her, then at the money.

"I must hurry back—but do take it—indeed you are welcome—"

He looked keenly at her, and half smiled.

"You are very kind, but you are mistaken—I only wanted a—"

Dell thrust the money in his hand.

"Never mind, please. I think I can see you are proud, but, please take it—there—"

She darted off in the twilight, and was back in the house before she was missed.

The next day Jessamine came into Dell's room, radiant as Jessamine only permitted herself to be under rare circumstances—her gray eyes flashing, her red lips parted in a smile of triumphant delight.

"Dell! See this! Now what do you say?"

She laid a square monogrammed envelope in the girl's lap—addressed to the Misses Warner; and bearing inside invitations to the reception at St. Denis place for a fortnight from that night.

Jessamine watched the girl's sweet face glow under the surprise; then saw, to her amazement, the flush of delight fade.

"Well, Dell! Of course we'll go! I'll take ten dollars I can spare and get me some sashes and wear natural flowers with it, and I know you have five dollars laid aside for an emergency—you can fix up freshly with it—gloves and a sash, you know. And who knows but what Hugh St. Denis may be captivated?"

Dell laid the envelope softly down.

"I can't go, dear—unless I wear my old white muslin which will look wretched beside your new sashes. I—I've spent my money."

Jessamine frowned.

"Spent your money! Why, I saw it this very morning in your drawer. Spent your money! Dell, what do you mean?"

Dell met the vexed eyes as calmly as she could—she was just a little in awe of this magnificent sister of hers.

"I gave it to that poor man last night, Jessie. I was so sorry. I am sure he wasn't the sort of man to talk to as you did. I know he deserved it."

Jessamine sat down, and folded her hands in icy wrath.

"Dell Warner, I believe you are the biggest fool that ever drew breath. Give five dollars to a tramp!—a beggar! Well, if it doesn't pass my comprehension!"

"I think I did right, Jessie; I know I did. Anyway, it is done, and can't be undone."

"And you can stay away from the St. Denis reception—all for a miserable drunken thief! I've no patience with you."

Jessamine swept out of the room—she was like a duchess in her movements, and Dell went on with her sewing, wondering if her old white muslin wouldn't look pretty well if it was nicely laundered; thinking that there was a sea-green silk sash somewhere she had never worn, and a pair of white kids at home in New York that Jessamine could go for when she went to buy her sashes. So, while her busy, deft fingers sewed through the summer days on Jessamine's airy dress, little Dell decided she would go, after all, and wear her fresh white dress, and tea roses in her golden tresses, and the sea-green sash knotted on her skirt—a simple, exquisite toilet that made a very Undine of her, that made people turn their heads for more than a second or third look when she and Jessamine entered the magnificent saloon.

It was perfectly delightful, everywhere. Mr. St. Denis possessed none but high-bred, intelligent friends, and the Misses Warner were treated accordingly. The music was heavenly, and from her seat where she sat like a queen in state, Jessamine watched their handsome host, who had bowed lowly over her hand when he was introduced—watched him, as in his quiet, self-possessed elegance of manner, he went among his guests.

Her heart was beating—would he, oh, would he ask her for the first dance, or would he go among the groups of stylish ladies from the city, any one of whom would be so honored by his attention?

And then, Jessamine saw Mr. St. Denis go straight across the room, right by her, and bow lowly to Dell, as he said a few words, and offered his arm.

Dell! Dell to lead the grand quadrille! Dell on Hugh St. Denis' arm, the observed of all observers—as fair as a sea-nymph, and so graceful, so sweetly unconscious of her radiant beauty!

Jessamine sat through that first select quadrille, and watched St. Denis' pale, handsome

face, as he bent it very near Dell's golden curls, his ardent, admiring eyes that looked so eagerly into the sweet, girlish face, that others beside Jessamine noted his attention.

Then, the dance over, St. Denis gave Dell his arm.

"That has been a delightful quadrille, Miss Dell. Consider my name on your card for at least half a dozen dances, to-night. By the way, Miss Dell, did you know I have something that belongs to you?"

They had reached Jessamine's chair by this time, and Dell turned laughingly to him.

"Something of mine? I do not see how that can be. Do you, Jessie?"

Jessamine favored him with her most fascinating smile.

"Indeed I do not—seeing that this is the first time we ever saw Mr. St. Denis."

He smiled in Dell's eyes.

"I'll leave you to fathom the mystery. Don't forget the first waltz for me, Miss Dell."

He went away, so handsome, so courtly, and Dell's foolish little heart was throbbing with new, vague delight, while Jessamine was almost suffocating with envy, at the signal triumph of her sister, who was at once the acknowledged belle of the room, and whose girlish heart was beating high with happiness when Mr. St. Denis came promptly for his waltz.

He drew her hand through his almost authoritatively.

"Miss Dell, it seems I have always known you, and yet you say you never saw me before. Suppose we take a walk through the conservatory instead of having this waltz?"

Into the fragrant semi-dark they went, where fountains tinkled and rare flowers bloomed, and the music came in veiled sweetness and richness.

I want you to be sure I am right, Miss Dell, when I say I have something of yours. Look at me closely. Have you never seen me before?"

He bent his face near hers. It was gravely smiling—and, oh, so tender and good; and Dell looked timidly at the smiling, yet stern eyes.

"I am sure I never saw you before, Mr. St. Denis."

"Then—have you ever seen this?"

He drew from his vest pocket a five-dollar bill—the very one, with a tiny bit of corner off it, that Dell had given the tramp.

"Don't you understand, dear child? I had taken a freak into my head that I would walk from New York up, and it was a grand walk, although it took three days, and ruined my clothes! I stopped at your little cottage, to beg a glass of water. You know the rest."

Dell's face was a marvel at that moment.

"In your kindness and goodness you gave it to me, Miss Dell, and the little act gave me an insight into your heart that a year of ordinary intercourse would never do. I shall keep it until you will buy it back. I have set a price on it, and if ever you are ready to give it, you can have it."

He put the money reverently away in his breast pocket, and took her out among the crowd again, a strangely happy girl.

And before the summer roses had faded, Dell paid the price for the five-dollar bill—her own pure heart—that Hugh St. Denis pleaded for so eagerly.

She is mistress of the grand house now, and Jessamine visits her once a year—not often, because Dell's husband doesn't care much for her. But the invalid mother has a life-long home amid the luxuries of St. Denis place, and Dell is happier than the birds that sing in the trees of the big old park.

Romance on the Rail.

The Train-Dispatcher's Story.

BY GUY GLYNDON.

A PRESS of business had given everybody more work than ought to be imposed on men, and my two weeks' holiday came to me gratefully enough, as a relief from the severe tax on my energies. The mental weight of responsibility—the constant knowledge that a little inaccuracy, a slight lapse of attention from intricate details, might involve the destruction of property and even the sacrifice of life, was what had worn upon me. And now I was to leave it all behind, and be as free from care and anxiety as a child.

After the dust and bustle of the busy thoroughfare, what so refreshing as the quiet of the country—its blue sky and green foliage, its cool, odorous breezes, and its mirrored waters! So to a sequestered village I betook myself, full of visions of trout-fishing, red-top clover, and—rest.

But that which was to stand first in reality found no place in my dreams. True, the flutter of a white dress or a tossing curl had sometimes appeared down the vistas of my mind-landscapes; but the faces accompanying were attractive only from their freshness, and I had no idea of yielding up my heart to a pink-cheeked village girl.

I reached my destination at two o'clock on a warm afternoon. My first treat was a bowl of bread and milk. After that I lay on my back in the velvety grass at the rear of the house, beneath the dense canopy of the oaks, listening to my aunt singing about her work. That was enough for the first afternoon—rest, mental, physical, spiritual!

Just before five o'clock my aunt called to me.

"Walter, come here. I have a surprise for you—and a pleasant one, I'll warrant!"

I got up lazily—what a luxury it was to be lazy!—and looked inquiringly into her smiling face. But I would not exert myself so much as to put my curiosity into words; so in silence she led me to the open front door and said:

"What do you think of her?"

One glance down the maple-shaded walk, to the gate which was just being swung open, and my aunt was a thing of the past. The source of my sudden emotion was a slender—girl, or woman, shall I say? A glance into her sharp-cut face, its pallor heightened by the habiliments of mourning which she wears, decides the question. The sensitive mouth, the blue-veined forehead, can have but one significance. She is a woman; for she has suffered.

Stepping back, that I might have opportunity to see her when she was unconscious of observation, I watched her through the half-parted curtains of the "best room." I caught the flash of a white, rounded arm, as the sleeve fell away while she was opening the gate; then my admiration was claimed by the grace of movement, as she sauntered somewhat wearily toward the house, trailing her hat over the fleur-de-lis that bordered the walk.

"Bless you, auntie! When did you gain such an acquisition?" I exclaimed, breathlessly.

"It's the 'school-marm,' Walter," she replied, smiling quietly.

"And she boards here?"

"Yes, for a period covering your stay."

"The idea of her 'boarding round'!" said I,

not a little indignant. "Auntie, she's a lady—every fiber of her! And to think of her being subjected to what she must have to endure with some of these people! But bless the fates for casting her lot here, for a time at least!"

"Tut! tut! Walter. That's one for her and two for yourself, isn't it?"

"No, I give you my word. I wish you could keep her all the time; and so does she, I'll venture to say."

"Hush! Do not let her hear your voice. I want her to meet you without previous warning, so that you can see the flash of her eyes."

My aunt stepped into the hall just as the girl-woman gained the veranda, and I saw the face of the latter brighten with a rarely beautiful smile. Glad animation replaced the pensive repose of her face like a gleam of sunshine, and disappeared as suddenly, as a drowning face might be drawn beneath the waters again. It was strange that such a fancy should occur to me; but I give it just as it arose in my mind.

The next instant they stood in the doorway, my aunt saying:

"Miss Bryant, my nephew, Walter Wingate."

The introduction was a complete surprise to her. The shell-like lids, with their long, fringing lashes, swept upward, unveiling rare dark eyes that thrilled me through and through. I felt that they read me at a glance, and would at once detect anything unworthy. Almost instantly the faint flush that had sprung to her cheeks died out, and she was the self-possessed lady, reserved, yet sincerely gracious.

I found that Miss Bryant had a taste for botany. In fact she had already collected quite an herbarium, which she showed me during the evening at the suggestion of my aunt, who knew how to help young people get acquainted. Upon learning that this was the fruit of morning rambles, I did what anybody else in my place would have done—I reconsidered my plans of lazy loitering, broke through my city habit of late rising, and got up at the delightful hour of six o'clock, to explore the secrets of exogens and endogens.

Whatever may have been my progress in botany, I soon found that I had acquired a deep interest in my fair instructress; and yet, at the end of the first week, which passed like a dream to me, I was on terms of no greater intimacy than during that first morning's ramble. I awoke to these facts with a start and a thrill of something like pain. Studying my companion, I found that she had hedged herself round by an invisible barrier of reserve, which made itself felt unconsciously, by a look or a tone. The next day, at a merry-making, I noticed that this was observed toward everybody. The village girls felt it and gave it the most convenient name—pride. The village belle, in particular, compared her own red-cheeked prettiness with the rare intellectual beauty of the school-teacher, and, feeling the superiority of the latter, hated its possessor accordingly. Her jealous sneer found ample emulation among the lesser lights. I saw that Miss Bryant observed all this, yet, though smarting keenly, gave no sign visible to less vigilant eyes. The heroism of her silent suffering awakened all my chivalry.

Later in the day one of her pupils ran to her and said:

"Miss Bryant, it ain't so, is it? Sarah Ann Wilber—the mean old thing!—says that you've got a beau or husband, or something, that ought to be in State's-prison, if he hasn't been there already; and if she was a mind to repeat all that her cousin Kate told her about you, you wouldn't know where to stick your head! And she always knew that some folks weren't any better than they ought to be, if they was only found out!"

I saw a great wave of crimson overspread neck and brow, and a look of terror come into the school-teacher's eyes, as she glanced around to see if the child's thoughtless prattle had reached other ears. Then her voice, with a quiver in it, said:

"Hush, Donney! Never mind Miss Wilber. Where did you get those pretty flowers! Let me tell you the names of them."

She struggled bravely; but she seemed crushed. Her eyes had a hunted look in them. This, then, was what lay hidden behind the veil.

Miss Bryant grew nervous, starting at every sound, with a momentary look of terror. Besides, she became vigilant, watching every look and tone of those about her. In moments of abstraction there was a far-away, weary look in her eyes, and the scarcely perceptible quivering of her lip was touching in the extreme.

The crisis was reached on the day before I was to return to the city. I stood in the door of the village bookstore and drugstore combined, glancing over a paper I had just purchased, when my attention was attracted by a group of young men who were chaffing with an inebriate who had just issued from the saloon next door. Dissipation had not yet effaced the marks of gentlemanly breeding, and he must yet be fine-looking when sober.

As I looked up, he stopped speaking and pushed his way through the group.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, with a drunken leer. "Here's Lady Moll in all her glory, as I'm a sinner! Well, my dear, I was just thinking how cunningly you gave us all the slip at Mother Dobson's. The Prince nearly grieved himself into the jim-jams—give you my word. Went on a three weeks' tear. But it would do his heart good to see you looking so fine. Where have you kept yourself all this time! Struck something rich?"

The villagers gaped open-mouthed to see him confront the school-mistress, and hear her with flaming brow say laughingly:

"Stand aside and let me pass!"

"Ho! ho! you always was a clipper. But put aside your airs, Moll, and give an old friend a reception."

With clasped hands and fast-waning strength she turned toward the group of wonder-struck villagers.

"Will nobody—" she began; and then seeing me striding toward her, she exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Wingate!"

I was at her side in an instant, holding both her hands, while she shrank close to me shivering.

"Whew!" ejaculated the inebriate. "That's the next lucky man!"

"Out of my way, you villain!" I cried, white to the lips with rage and pain. "And if you molest this lady further—"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the stranger. "Hear him, boys! He calls that beauty a lady! That's rich! and she the Prince's—"

A fierce blow from my fist cut short the foul epithet he was about to hurl at her, and felled him senseless to the ground. Then I hurried her home, almost carrying her up-stairs to her room.

Hurriedly explaining matters to my aunt, I returned to the village, just in time to see the man who had caused so much mischief on the rear platform of the receding train. The news had already spread through the village, and idle tradesmen were standing in knots discussing the dainty bit of scandal. I could not bear their sudden silence and curious looks as I drew near,

for they already regarded me as "bein' after the school-marm;" and so returned home, cut to the heart.

In that moment I knew that I loved her. Did I distrust her? Not one whit! I had studied her, and knew that she was incapable of evil.

That evening she remained locked in her room, refusing even the sympathy of my aunt; and in the morning we found only those lines, unaddressed:

"I make no defense. If you cannot think of me kindly, suspending all judgment, forget, as soon as possible,"

My aunt sat with compressed lips, looking shocked and grieved.

"Do you doubt her?" I demanded, fiercely.

"Walter," she replied, gravely, "I hope, for your sake—"

"Oh, you're a woman, and just like all the rest of them!" I cried, interrupting her. "The whole contemptible crew seek to build themselves up by dragging others under their feet."

"Remember that your mother is a woman," said my aunt, reddening with natural indignation.

"I am heartily ashamed to be forced to acknowledge the fact!" I replied. "I hope that she is an exception to the rule."

And I left her presence, to return soon afterward and apologize for the discourtesy I had been betrayed into by my pain.

Search for Mary was fruitless, though I got a week's extension of my vacation and employed private detectives until my money was gone. And then, with a